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'A Sure Seat'

Reminiscences of
HUNTING AND HORSES

by

A Fox-Hunting Woman

MRS. PHILIP MARTINEAU

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My warm thanks to all who have so kindly lent me pictures for this book. Especially to Major Richard Archer-Houblon for his amusing pencil illustrations of various incidents, and to Messrs. Knoedler for their courtesy in lending me the various reproductions of sporting pictures.

ALICE MARTINEAU.

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CHAPTER I

HORSES OF MY EARLY DAYS—THE FLINT AND DENBIGH—SIR WATKIN WYNN'S HOUNDS

JINNY ruled us all. She was a very privileged person and did more or less as she chose. Firstly, because she had twice saved the life of her master, the Judge. Secondly, because she was lovely, with large, dark eyes and satin-white hair, and, lastly, because she had such a beautiful family of sons and daughters, increasing year by year. It is hardly to be wondered at, when I recall my very earliest impressions, that this nearly pure-bred Arabian mare, with a black skin beneath the silky white coat, should be so inextricably woven into them. Other far-back recollections are of a rippling salmon river with brown water singing over the stones, and a plank bridge, crossing which I

used to lose my head, and would sit down and ignominiously wriggle across on my tummy. Pincher, the terrier, was among them. He who hated black gaiters and always tried to bite the Bishop's if he called. And other small memories, such as a battered hat with a blue ribbon and a small blue book of violent colour, which colour I can never see without a feeling of longing and yearning for the unknown. The house near the salmon river was given up when I was just five, and we moved to a house on Cwm mountain, but Jinny, with all her charms and her occasional wicked ways, remained, and was part and parcel of my early life, and the love of horses was ingrained in my nature. All through my life I have never failed to recognise a horse, though short-sighted enough where human beings were concerned; perhaps because the beauty of a fine horse has something so complete and perfect in it, something that fills the eye and satisfies it wholly.

The first time that Jinny saved her master's life was one autumn afternoon, when the wheel of the dog-cart went over an unexpected heap of stones and the cart turned over. She made no attempt to get away, though only a quarter of a mile from home, but stood till dusk deepened into night whinnying to attract attention till help came.

The second time was out hunting. His horse fell on the further side of a high hedge, and Jinny, following closely with my eldest brother, then a boy,

riding her, saw her master lying just below as she jumped. But she made the super-equine effort of her life and cleared both man and horse.

This reminds me of a curious happening with the Garth many years later, when I was saved by a dream from being jumped on. The well-known big game hunter, Mr. Littledale, rode up to me one morning and told me he had had a horrible dream the night before, in which his horse had jumped on me and killed me. He was so upset about it that I took care to keep well away from him all day. The next time we were out, hounds were running across Haines Hill towards Ashridge Wood, and we came to a fence with a deep drop and ditch on the other side into one of our own fields. Mr. Littledale was behind me, and I, seeing his horse was very hard to hold, and remembering his dream, pulled to one side and let him go on, which he did like a rocket. Lucky for me that I did pull out, as my mare Ladybird came down on landing and fell back in the ditch. Beyond a wetting I was none the worse, but had that pulling horse jumped on the top of us the dream might have come true!

To go back to Jinny, she was perfect under saddle, either hacking or hunting, but if put in single harness her proud spirit revolted, and she became spiteful and disagreeable, snapping and showing her teeth with her ears laid back, and we children took good care to keep out of her reach on those occasions. Also

she would crawl like a snail and refuse to hurry for anyone. She and a black horse made a pretty pair, and usually worked well together. But once when we drove a long way, even for those days, to see the salmon come in at Llandrillo, Blackstone, as his name was, would not go up to his collar. Each time he was urged on, Jinny would redouble her own efforts, and really pulled the whole weight all the way home.

Next day, poor Blackstone was ill, really ill. Jinny had known it, and had done her best to save him on the long journey.

She had a large family, five or six greys, a chestnut, and a bay, all of them by those good cock-tail horses, as they were called, that travelled the country in those days. Some were nearly thoroughbred, and all well bred and with good bone, and though it was before the day of Premium horses, you could not have seen a better stamp of hunter anywhere than these 16-hand children of Jinny's (who was under 15 hands herself). They were hunted in the winter, and my father liked to give them light harness work in summer. The limestone soil had doubtless much to do with his success with them, and they lived on the best of home-grown oats and hay, also bred on a limestone soil!

The two I admired most were own brother and sister. Bismarck, an iron grey, and Stella, a sweet-tempered golden chestnut. In those days it was the fashion to drive horses of different colours: a grey

and a chestnut, or a black and a white were quite the thing.

These two were quite devoted to one another, and, when apart, if Bismarck saw another chestnut, he would whinny and get quite upset. They were so happy when together.

One pair, Jeannette and Jeannot, I hardly remember, and General Prim and Sir Garnet were not among my great friends. Prim was sold to someone who lived near Wrexham, and lived to a good old age, for I saw him many years after.

My first remembered grief was the death of Jinny. I could not make out why everyone was so strange and disturbed; the coachman was crying, and my mother sending off telegrams to the nearest town. (The Judge had gone to some distant court, and never got them.) When I learned that Jinny had broken her leg, I slipped away from the governess and made off for the field where I knew that the mare and her latest foal were to be found. Never shall I forget the sad sight of dear Jinny lying down with a bone sticking right up out of her flesh. (She had broken it high up.) The little foal, with its muzzle all dabbled in its mother's blood, was wandering round and round her. One of the men was holding the mare's head on his knees and fondling her, and there wasn't a dry eye to be seen. She had been cantering across the field, the foal after her, towards a gap in the hedge, and, when she neared it, a man

suddenly jumped up and waved his arms to turn her back. She turned so sharply that she fell and broke her leg in the stifle. The day dragged on, and no answer came to the telegrams. The mare was in great pain, and apparently nothing could be done for her. So most reluctantly the order went forth for her to be shot. The coachman, crying like a child, refused to do it, and eventually the bailiff put an end to her misery.

But oh! the rage and despair of the Judge when he returned, never having had the telegrams. Nothing could shake his belief that he could have saved her himself had he been there by slinging her, but I doubt it, for the same thing happened years later to one of my own mares, and though she was slung in a sort of hammock, it was found impossible to save her, in spite of all the efforts of our good friend Wheatley, the Reading vet.

There were many other good friends of mine among the horses. Fanny, the pony I rode, who when ill consumed bottles of port wine and dozens of eggs (it was said). Smiler, a big black cart horse, with a wide pink mouth, who if he got loose would bite pieces out of the other farm horses. Blaze and Bella, a smart pair of light farm horses, who went in the brougham when it was dark and they didn't show! (No, they were not Shires, Major Archer Houblon!)

But the luck of the house went with Jinny. The place and the horses were sold, owing to my father's

illness, and he died a couple of years later. His death was owing to a hunting accident which happened many years before. He was staying with Mr. Wilbraham of Delamere, who mounted him on a very headstrong horse, and, galloping after hounds across the park, the horse ran away and put his foot in a rabbit hole, and my father was thrown with great force. He nearly broke his neck, and, though he

recovered in a measure, the doctors said that paralysis was only a question of time.

For a couple of years before his death he drove a black cob in a low carriage, one Charley, who was not interesting. Still, now and again I was allowed to gallop old Charley on a nearby common, and we also had dear Jinny's last filly, who had never filled out as she should have. She had a pretty trick of drinking tea out of a saucer in a ladylike manner, and

was an "illegant slip of a thing," as the old Irish groom called her.

Three years later my mother took us to Wales again to stay with my eldest brother. There my next friend was Paddy, a weight-carrying cob. Dapple-grey he was and of decided views. One frosty day I was put up on him in a field and told to canter him round.

Paddy, being fit to jump out of his skin, and finding a featherweight on his back, lost his head—kicked and bucked all round the field—and I lost my seat!

We made friends later on, but not then.

He hated cordially when he did hate, and he hated the groom. On one occasion the man had brought him round to the front door. After a minute's perfect peace he seized the brim of the man's hat in his teeth and threw it on the ground, and when the groom stooped to pick it up Paddy gave him a real good bite behind! With a yell he clapped both hands to his breeches and backed into the yard, whence he was heard praying for the cook to bring him a needle and cotton!

That autumn, after leaving school, I rode anything

I could get hold of; even the doctor's hard-worked nags were requisitioned, and I had my first day's hunting. So little did I know about it that I didn't even put my left knee under the crutch, but over it. And to this day I don't know how I stuck on.

I went to stay in the Vale of Clwyd, where I was born, and a girl friend persuaded her father to let us ride the carriage horses to the meet of the Flint and Denbigh Hounds. But we had rare fun, for, of course, we hunted. I on Bob, she on Barney. Bob bucked, off and on, all the time; luckily I stayed *on*. We scrambled about, over low stone walls, in and out of gorse hummocks cropped closely by the Welsh sheep into round balls, and all the while on the close, springy turf of the Welsh hills.

After this I proceeded to horrify my relatives by spending the whole of my minute quarter's allowance on a saddle and a habit, determined to get the best I could out of life, "the best" being then and for the greater part of my life, hunting. We were living at that time in Sir Watkin Wynn's country, and many a mount did I get. People were more than kind to the girl of sixteen, who had nothing to ride and was as keen as mustard. A lightweight with good hands, my inherited sense of "country" used to get me near hounds fairly often. The late Sir Watkin, who was adored by high and low, was my best friend, for he was the only person who ever took the trouble to teach me anything, either about hunting

or hunting manners. The lucky girl of to-day is taught to ride, taught to jump, etc., as part of her education. I only trust she is taught manners too, for that means everything as regards other people's comfort in the hunting field.

The best-mannered person to hounds I ever met was Lady Gussie Fane, who hunted with the Quorn and neighbouring packs. It was a real pleasure to be in the same hunt with her, for, not only a good sportswoman, she was so charming and pleasant at gates and in lots of small ways.

The worst I ever met was Prince Pless, who didn't care if he knocked anyone out of their place at a fence or not. He rode a great heavy black horse straight into me once as my horse was jumping, and I don't know how we escaped.

To go back to Sir Watkin. Payne was huntsman—the celebrated Payne—but I only just remember him, as he was shortly succeeded by Goodall.

Sir Watkin had a curious way of talking, as though he had plums in his mouth, and one missed many of his good stories by not being able to understand him. He'd say: "Now you must promise not to tell that to anyone." I safely promised, as I hadn't caught a word. The first day Goodall was out Sir Watkin said: "I don't like my new man's 'noises.'" I suppose he was so used to Payne's.

He was absolutely devoted to his elder daughter, Abise (Louise), and they were inseparable. She and

THE LATE SIR WATKIN WYNN, BART., M.F.H.

I were born the same day and came out at the same ball at Wynnstay. She had a small, neat figure and was a very finished rider and always "up," and had one special favourite, a horse called Silvertail, a dark brown or black, with grey hairs on its tail.

Young as I was, there were several people it was not easy to forget who hunted with Sir Watkin's. First, there was the Empress of Austria, whom I had seen the year before I began to hunt. She was a very striking figure, who wore habits just a little different from anyone else's, and always with a neat fur collar, generally of black astrachan. She came over from Combermere Abbey, where she was staying, to dine with Sir Watkin and Lady Wynn, and the story goes that she did not approve the list of guests sent her, and declared she would only dine with her host and hostess, and that when the time came she sent her own dinner over and her own chef to cook it! This to Sir Watkin, of all people, he who was known as the "King in Wales"!

He once travelled in a train with a man who asked civilly enough whose the land was they were passing through. "Mine," snapped Sir Watkin. This went on at intervals for some hours, and finally the man got out and told the guard that there was a lunatic in the carriage.

A great character was Jonathan, Sir Watkin's second horseman, as well known as his master.

Now and again one came across the Corbetts. The

M.F.H. of that name, who hunted the Cheshire, was a plain-speaking man, and many were the stories told of him, one being that his niece once timidly asked him as they left one covert: "Where are you going to, uncle?" To which he replied gruffly: "To h——!" "Yes," answered the girl sweetly, "I know, uncle; but where are you going to *now*?"

Another was that his horse fell at a ditch with him, and, before he could get up, several loose horses, which were grazing in the field, got excited and jumped right over him and his horse as they were struggling in the ditch. When he eventually rejoined the field his language was too frightful, and he cursed them one and all for riding over him! No one dared stem the torrent by explaining to him what had really happened.

The Woolrych Whitmores were regular followers of the Wynnstay Hunt, though after Sir Watkin's death they hunted with another pack. Always neat and trim out hunting, they never changed in appearance, and forty years afterwards looked exactly as they did when I first saw them.

Sir Archibald Peel and his daughters were great supporters of the hunt. One of them is now Lady Askwith, a well-known public speaker. Another character was the Rev. Theophilus Puleston, who lived at Worthenbury and came out regularly on his black cob. He married late in life, and when someone asked him if his wife hunted, I heard him say,

"She *likes* walking; *let* her walk," and rode off! Later on he succeeded his brother, Sir Richard, but the baronetcy died out with him, though his sister's son, Crawshay Bailey, got Emral, that wonderful house, and took the name of Puleston.

Many were the stories told of Bay Middleton, who piloted the Empress of Austria, but I think perhaps that this about Hughie Owen, one of the same little group, has never appeared in print. "Hughie," getting into a train and seeing bags occupying a corner seat, asked the man sitting opposite to them if the seat were engaged. "Yes, it is," said the man grumpily.

Hughie let the window down, and, when the train moved off, seized the bags and hurled them through the window on to the platform. The stranger was apoplectic with fury, and Hughie explained mildly that he'd only done it out of kindness, as the owner of the luggage had evidently been left on the platform!

He was eccentric, to say the least of it, and on one occasion, when hunting with the Quorn, was obliged to dismount and open a gate, as there was no other possible way out of the field. Having led his horse through, he deliberately shut the gate again in the face of an expectant group of riders who were waiting to go through, mounted his horse, and rode away. I am glad to say that I have never seen anything quite so bad-mannered as this myself. Everyone was

furious, especially Herbert Praed (afterwards Sir Herbert), a very popular bachelor with charming manners, and his brother Algy, both well-known and keen riders. The latter came into Owsden Hall, near Newmarket, on his brother's death, and is as fond of hunting as ever. His first wife was a Fane, and he afterwards married my husband's sister Mildred. She it is who tells the delightful story of the keeper's wife whose husband had stayed on with the "new people" when the property was sold. The wife of the late owner happened to be in the neighbourhood one day and went to see her, and in answer to questions the keeper's wife said: "Oh yes, m'lady, they mean to be very kind—most kind, I'm sure; *but we do miss the polished levity of the aristocracy.*"

Among the various horses lent me I only remember two—one a racehorse, belonging to my brother, that he wanted to "qualify," Paragon by name. He did rather well afterwards, but was a bad ride, as he *would* go on the grass, not caring how he squeezed poor me up against a wall or into a hedge. Evidently hard roads from cover to cover were a new experience for him. The other belonged to the butcher, quite a small, well-bred mare, who went brilliantly with me in a fast run, and was sold the next day for £80.

An anonymous gift of half a dozen pairs of gloves was sent to me a little later, and I always suspicioned it was the butcher!

Sir Watkin died soon after we left Wales for

CHARLES PAYNE, HUNTSMAN TO THE LATE SIR WATKIN WYNN, AND ROYAL, A FAMOUS HOUND.

Brussels, and I had but one day's hunting again with that pack, some years later, when staying at Marchwiel for Mrs. Salisbury Mainwaring's ball at Otely. Ethel Piercy, afterwards Lady Buchanan Jardine, kindly mounted me, and we had an excellent run on the Whitchurch side of the country. She looked and went well and ranks in my eyes with Abise Wynn and Mrs. Jock Trotter (Pytchley) as the three prettiest riders I knew to hounds. She had a good seat, good hands, and rode a particular stamp of small horse which suited her; the one she lent me felt small to me, but went well. The run must have been severe on horses, for one man in our party killed his, which somewhat dimmed his popularity.

The Dowager Lady Wynn was at the ball the night before, her first appearance after Sir Watkin's death. Never to be forgotten was the way she put up her glasses and surveyed the room with hauteur. "What is that dance?" she said to me. Meekly I answered, and thankful I was not to be in it. "Kitchen Lancers they call it, Lady Wynn." "Better have been left to the scullery," was the only remark she made. I used to go and see her sometimes in her big house in St. James's Square (now Hampton's), and she even gave a ball there, when we danced in the dining-room, as the drawing-rooms were only safe for supper! She was one of the last of the great ladies, and great ladies in those days were privileged to be as haughty—one would call it rude to-day—as they liked.

Sir Watkin and my father were great friends, and he offered to build a house for him in Wynnstay Park, if he would only go and live there! Colonel Mostyn, commanding the Royal Welch Fusiliers hunted with Sir Watkin, and was kind enough to let me follow him (when I could). He was a gallant soldier and a keen rider. I can just remember his father, the old Lord Mostyn, when I was a child, hunting with the Flint and Denbigh at well over eighty. Colonel Mostyn afterwards became General Sir Savage Mostyn, and married. He certainly encouraged hunting in his regiment, and everyone went out who could.

The Cornwallis Wests were living at Ruthin Castle, and I first saw her when I was only seven years old. But her marvellous beauty made a deep impression on me, young as I was. We often met her, and I shall always think of her as the most beautiful creature I have ever seen. No one else could hold a candle to her, and she had charm and wit as well as being a "raging" beauty. Years later, when my husband and I were staying with them at Ruthin Castle, she told us that when King Edward, then Prince of Wales, was coming to stay at Ruthin she sent to Liverpool to hire a pair of smart horses (they only having a poor little single brougham horse left of all their splendour). "And be sure to send the best driver you've got." "My dear, when the man arrived, behold! he had a great red beard. So I flew

at him and said how dared they send such a man to drive H.R.H.! 'Well,' he said, with a grin, 'you cowld them to send the best driver they'd got, and sure I'm he!'"

She was most impulsive, and once when staying with me and we were driving pretty fast up a hill to catch a train, she shrieked to my coachman to pull up, and called out to a woman in the road to offer her a lift. "No thank you," said she; "I'm stopping here." And we missed the train!

It used to be a great pleasure to go over to Eaton to see the Duke of Westminster's horses—Doncaster, Bend-Or, and Ormond among them. The latter looked quite a small horse, and the stud groom was very fond of asking visitors what height they thought he was. Most people said 15.2 or 3, and the man had the greatest pleasure in telling them that he was 16.3. He was so perfectly compact and proportioned that he never looked his height.

CHAPTER II

RIDING IN BRUSSELS—WITH THE NEW FOREST BUCKHOUNDS—LORD SPENCER AND THE PYTCHLEY

After leaving Sir Watkin's country we went to Brussels for six months, and then to London, and very little hunting came my way for some years. Thanks to our kind Sir Watkin, who gave us introductions (to Sir Edward Malet, the British Minister, for one), we knew several people, among them an English-loving and very sporting little man, called Emil van Branteghem. Finding that I was very fond of riding, he induced some of the officers of the 2nd Guides to let me ride their horses. And although I was working very hard at painting and music I managed to ride quite often. The 2nd Guides were very smart in their cherry coloured overalls and green

ackets, but their horses were like our troop-horses, nd not at all the officer's charger in get-up and grooming. Alas! that good regiment was completely viped out in the first days of the Great War.

We used to ride for miles in the Bois de Cambres, nd though a very different thing to hunting, there vas always an element of surprise waiting for one in he horses, who kept one busy all the time.

The first day I rode, my mount bolted with me all he length of the Avenue Louise. He was being losely pursued by poor Galfrid de Trafford, now lead, who took this unusual course of trying to stop im. The horse naturally thought it was a race and went all the faster, and never did I get a pull at him ill de Trafford pulled up, and I was able to stop the big fiddle-headed brute. These Belgian officers took a keen pleasure in the *manége*, and could make their horses dance and passage and do all kinds of tricks. They had no hunting, and plenty of time on their hands, and the *haut école* was their great amusement. All the same, their hands were useless on a light-mouthed, well-bred horse.

One of them had a black thoroughbred called Satan, which no one could ride with any comfort. After trying him one day in a *manége*, or riding-school, out of doors, I said I would ride him if they would give me a bridle with no curb. Without a cruel bit in his tender mouth, poor Satan went like a lamb, and was an enchanting hack, full of play and gaiety, with

beautiful easy action. He was quickly sold for a large sum into Italy!

After a good gallop through the soft sandy rides we would drink milk at a special dairy in the woods. I used to think it such a queer taste for men! Only one lady rode regularly in Brussels, a Madame Creed —an Englishwoman. But one day the sister of my especial Guides officer accompanied us. She looked like a large feather bed (with two arms and a head) on her horse. And no wonder, for she confided in me later that she wore all her usual clothes, including a flannel "pettie," and, in addition, a thickly wadded black satin petticoat beneath her habit, which, of course, worked up as she rode, and she ended by resembling a balloon! Although I was looked on as a mad English "mees," and christened "*La demoiselle qui dit des choses par hasard*," she begged to have my breeches copied for herself!

The next winter I was back in England, and had my first experience of hunting a stag, not a carted deer, but a real wild, red deer, in the New Forest, where they were getting too numerous. They do a great deal of damage to crops. Farmers had complained, and the edict was sent from London to kill some of them off.

My brother had taken a house for his wife at Bournemouth that winter, and asked me down for a day's hunting. It was the last day of the old season, and the meet was very far away; so far that the horses

A HUNTER AT GRASS, BY J. FERNELEY.

were sent on early in the morning, and we trained later. They were in hard condition and just down from Sir Watkin's, but they had the longest day I ever remember. My brother said they must have travelled seventy miles that day by the time they got home. It sounds incredible, but they had over twenty miles to the meet, a good deal of jogging about watching the tufters separate the stag from the hinds (a beautiful sight for those who love to see hounds work) and the longest run I have ever seen. It was said to have been twenty-seven miles, and after all these years who shall contradict it! The horses jogged home again and were none the worse next day.

My mount was a slashing big grey that could gallop on. There was little or no jumping, which, of course, was a save for them, and we killed our stag after a desperate chase. I must say I did not relish the idea of seeing a lady give the *coup de grâce*, and turned aside. She was First Whip to her father, Captain Lovell, and a fine rider, and is still living in the Forest.

Mr. Gerald Lascelles, the Ranger of the Forest, was a very courteous, charming man, and the tradition of making the stranger welcome is, I understand, still kept up.

I kept the "slot" given me for many years, but I had found the constant galloping along those interminable rides, unable to see anything either side for

trees, or skirting orange-coloured patches of bog, very monotonous. If the horses were not stiff the next day, I was, though I had never been stiff before! I put it down to soaking in a hot bath for a long time. Ever after, I made it a rule never to stay long in one's bath after hunting. Certainly I was hardly ever troubled again, even when I had not ridden for months.

My brother always bought exactly the same stamp of horse, as if nothing else filled his eye. Big, good-shouldered horses, with plenty of bone, but a trifle coarse in the head, I thought. They carried him well, and he rode a good line up to 1914. He was Master of the Tedworth Foxhounds, then of the North Herefordshire, and, lastly, of the Galway "Blazers." But the only occasion I ever hunted with his hounds was a day's cubbing in Herefordshire, and I did not enjoy it at all. We seemed to be either in wired hop-gardens or orchards all the time. The only time he ever hunted in a fashionable country was when he had a house at Weedon. He mounted me occasionally when hunting with the Pytchley and the Grafton after I was married. Well do I remember a certain Monday with the Grafton, in about the biggest country I have ever seen. There were enormous hedges, at least 10 feet high and quite unjumpable.

I'm not quite sure, but think the record for a high jump in the New York Horse Show is under 7 feet—

6 feet $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches to be exact. Possibly those terrible Grafton fences have been cut and laid since my day. Anyhow, the good bay mare Quits was quite sure they were not for her or any other horse to jump.

I forget who had the Grafton Hounds then, but later on one of the Douglas-Pennants took them, and showed good sport. Badby Wood was rather a heart-breaking place, but what charming views of Fawsley and the wood one gets from the higher ground! The Lady of the Land, who was a fine figure of a woman, invariably rode a horse several sizes too narrow for her great bulk, and was nicknamed "The joint too big for the dish." I can't remember if it were she, or another equally autocratic lady in another hunt, who had the great idea of keeping people away from her by constantly waggling her hand from her hip, as if to warn them her horse kicked. (It didn't dare.)

One day she was waggling away, no one within ten yards of her, as we were waiting outside a covert. The opportunity was too good to be missed, and it and the hand were seized by some sportsman from a neighbouring country. He shook the waggling hand warmly and then rode off! I think I was mounted on that occasion by Frank Douglas-Pennant, who put me up at Lillingstone Darell, his mother's place.

While staying at Flore, near Weedon, with my brother, I met that good sportsman, the late Mr. Walton, head of a firm of estate agents, who most

kindly offered to mount me whenever I liked. I think he must have known what it was to be without a horse himself in his early days, and have felt sympathetically towards me in consequence.

His horses were all of the 500-guinea stamp (which meant a good deal more in those days than in these). He kept a pack of harriers near London, where his horses were schooled until December, when they came up to Weedon and fetched great prices from such men as Lord Lonsdale.

The first he lent me was a good-looking bay called Business, and his pretty little girl told me as we rode home after the hunt the reason why. "You see, if anyone calls to see father, we can truly say he's out on Business!" Mr. Walton piloted me. "Now, remember," he said, as we got away, "your horse can jump anything that mine does." In spite of this, when I saw him galloping at one of the big Pytchley bullfinches my heart stood still. But Business flew over it, as he did over all the others, with great ease. Presently we came to a five-barred gate which I was about to open, leaning well over on the off side in order to do so, when, without any warning, Business hopped over! I was swung out of the saddle, turning a complete somersault on to my feet in a muddy splash the other side of the gate, and with the reins still in my hand. At that moment, hounds having turned, some of the field swept back and wanted to know why I was standing in the pond. They wouldn't

believe I'd had a fall, as I hadn't a speck of mud on my habit! The only evidence to support my assertion that I wasn't standing in the pond for pleasure was my broken crutch, which I had wrenched nearly off.

Mr. Walton apologised profusely for not having warned me that Business invariably jumped his gates standing!

One of the mounts he gave me was not so pleasant. She was very hot in a crowd and hard-mouthed, and crashed me into a post in rushing madly through a gate, nearly breaking my leg just above the ankle in the process.

I had to get straight back to town from hunting, and was in the greatest pain and quite helpless on arrival. I shall never forget the kindness of Captain Elmhirst ("Brooksby," the *Field's* chronicler of hunting). I had often seen him out hunting, but I did not know him. However, on seeing my plight, he came up to the carriage door at Euston and managed to get me into a cab with my saddle and impedimenta. This was the end of my hunting that season, as I was laid up for weeks with the bruised bone, a longer job sometimes than a broken one.

Lord Spencer was Master then—a big man with a big red beard (the Red Earl). He was a great sportsman and most popular with everyone, in spite of the fact that his language was warm. Very often the Pytchley field deserved it, and, anyhow, they never

resented it from this great nobleman, who had "a way" with him and never lashed unoffending people into fury with his tongue because things had gone wrong.

A very good painter of horses was Major Giles, who lived in London when I was first married and was painting horses myself. He afterwards moved to Newmarket, where he had plenty of commissions to paint racehorses. When his mother, with whom he lived in town, died, and the house was broken up, someone asked him what he was doing about Martha, their old, faithful servant. Was he getting rid of her? "Get rid of Martha!" he said in a fury. "I'd sooner shoot her!"

Another equine artist of my acquaintance was Johnny Matthews, who was married to one of Sir Richard Quain's daughters. No one could paint a harness horse better than he, or a smart hack. Full of condition, and lots of polish and high-lights. I found it much easier to paint a horse whose coat shone and reflected the high-lights, rather than a grey horse; for if there was a difficult bit of drawing, such as a muscle, a good blue high-light could be resorted to with perfect confidence to hide it.

I did not carry on very long, though. I painted a few of my friends' horses, with a day's hunting thrown in now and again. On one occasion I was painting a pretty chestnut mare belonging to dear old "Friday" Thornton, that enthusiastic cricketer and athlete of

L'AMAZONE: THE TITLE-PAGE FOR A WALTZ, DRAWN BY THE AUTHOR WHEN A GIRL.

his day, who would travel hundreds of miles to run against anyone he heard had a turn for speed. Friday was then M.P. for Battersea, and lived with his wife and mother-in-law in a fine old house on Clapham Common, with a library that had been a favourite sitting-room of Wilberforce, Pitt, and others, looking on to great cedars and stretching lawns. At the death of old Mrs. Thornton—he had married his cousin—the house was pulled down, and several small houses now occupy the site of house and garden.

He was very fond of horses and riding, and rode up every day to the House of Commons and back at night.

To return to the story of the chestnut mare, she was very quiet and well mannered, and so I was left in her box to paint her. It was a large loose-box; she was at one end and I at the other. The picture was progressing famously when, without any warning, back went her ears and she came for me with open mouth and a most vicious expression. Luckily, the groom was close by and, hearing the commotion, ran in and quieted her. After that I preferred to have my "subjects" held by their man!

The same thing happened to me once when I was painting a collie's portrait. The dog sat in the far corner of the room and evidently disliked being looked at fixedly, for, after some time, he turned on me and snarled and growled. One has to work very quickly when painting animals, and it is a great strain,

as they never keep still, and one has to seize such opportunities as arise. I worked sometimes in Maud Earl's studio, on the days she was not there. *She* never had any difficulty over the "pose" of a sitter, for she had a perfectly trained boy, and, once she had chalked the marks on the dais, it was the boy's job to keep the dog in the proper position. Maud Earl not only could draw and paint a dog, but she knew all the points of each breed and was able to do some delicate flattery in her portraits. Her father, Mr. Earl, was a well-known artist for horses and dogs, and she had inherited his talent. A few years ago she went to America, where prices are high, and she never came back.

It was great fun generally, though now and again things were difficult, as when I had to paint a favourite collie belonging to Sir Edmund Lacon. It was a hot August day, and the dog was very sleepy. As a last resource I got some bits of raw liver to tempt him, but as the hours wore on even that lost its charm, and the combination of lumps of liver, flies, a sleepy dog, and great heat were not pleasing.

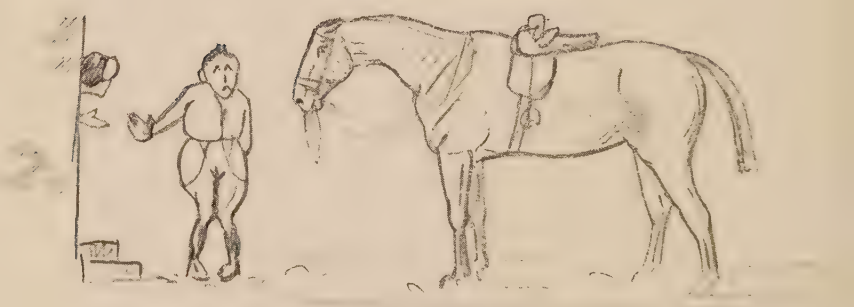
After my eldest boy was born I did no more painting beyond a sketch now and again when in Cornwall or Scotland. We used to stay a good deal with the Lacons at Rainham in Norfolk, and often went out cubbing from there. It was a most cheery house to stay in, as little Lady Lacon had a positive gift for making people enjoy themselves—it was before the

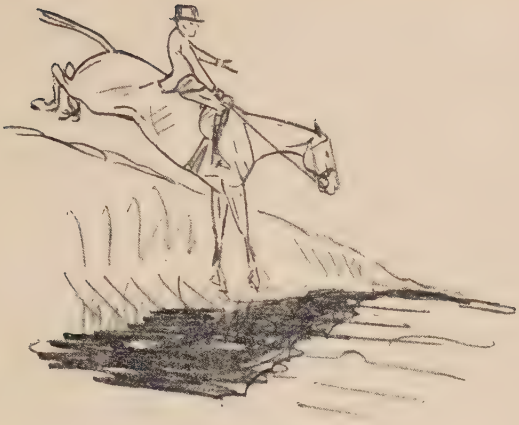
advent of Bridge—at after-dinner games. One of the games ended in bloodshed, however. Some man (a young curate) was blindfolded and shown a very pretty girl at the end of a double row of people, and told that if he reached her he was to kiss her. In spite of many obstacles, he did reach her, but only to find a man substitute had taken her place—one of the Astleys, as far as I can remember—with a good heavy moustache, and, on feeling this bristly appendage, the curate's wrath knew no bounds. He seized it and pulled some of it out, whereupon Harry Astley, wild with pain, hit out violently, landing a heavy blow on the curate's nose! Bandages, basins, blood, and so to bed!

Dear Mr. Bunny Hare, the Eton master, was staying at Rainham and was told all about the ghost that was supposed to wander round the upper rooms—his room, in fact. Piercing screams were heard by some of us in the night, and in the morning Mr. Hare came to breakfast looking very white, and, as he left that day, we never found out what happened, but I think the Lacon boys knew all right! We had some hurriedly improvised ladies' races one day after cubbing. My pony had done it before and started off with a bound at full gallop, which I was quite unprepared for, though not unseated.

Practical jokes were at the height of popularity in my young days. To smuggle in a rooster and put him on the top of a four-post bed was a harmless joke

enough, though the early crowing as day dawned was, perhaps, unpleasing to the occupant of the bed. But many of the tricks played were really bad. I stayed in a house once where some harmless ones were played—apple-pie beds, etc., with the servants quite aware of what was going on. At breakfast a guest looked straight at me and said: "I hope the cows did not disturb you in the night." Naturally, they had not, as they were fields away. I found afterwards that the maids, after we had gone to bed, and before the men came up, continued our fun by hanging cow-bells on the springs of the men's beds so that every time they moved the bells jingled. And no one ever believed us that we hadn't done it.





CHAPTER III

IRELAND—HUNTING IN COUNTY CORK—THE DUHALLOW—THE UNITED

With what delight did I, living in London and just boxing my horses for any odd day's hunting now and again, get a letter from my youngest brother in Ireland, saying: "Why don't you come over for six weeks and hunt here?" And in no time at all I was off to Fermoy for the end of the season with a French maid, a saddle, and my husband's chestnut horse, the Colonel. Budbrook, the steeplechaser, not being the kind of horse for a bank country, had to be left behind, much to my annoyance. But after I got acquainted with those huge erections called banks—and stone-faced at that—and pictured him trying to fly them, I was thankful I had not taken him over.

My brother gave me up his lodgings and slept in barracks. There was just about room for two of us to sit at table, and the whole thing was as primitive as Ireland could produce and as topsy-turvy as "Alice in Wonderland." My maid, who knew but little English, was quite out of her element, and had nothing to amuse herself with, unless one could count the curate who lodged in the same house, and for whom she made pyjamas. The food was simplicity itself, but of the very best—either chicken and pancakes, or chops and apple pie. They were quite large chickens, but the pair of us ate every bit up at a sitting, and never has food tasted so good since; and the thought of Irish cakes and soda bread with lashings of butter—which every girl knew how to make—brings tears to my eyes.

We were to hunt with the Duhallow and the United, and when my horse gave out I was to be mounted. Horses did more work in Ireland than was possible in any other country, and I saw one horse come out four days in a week, and no one was surprised. The going was light, and the banks didn't seem to take it out of the horses as much as English jumping does.

Lord Ennismore, now Lord Listowel, was the Master of the Duhallow, and lived with his parents at Convamore on the famous salmon river, the Blackwater. He was a keen fisherman, and on one occasion when I was staying there he hid, or caused

to be hid, a very dead dog in the bushes of a favourite walk by the riverside. He had spotted something there he wanted to keep to himself—either some salmon in a pool or some nesting bird—and thought this the best way to insure that no one should walk by the river. First, Lady Listowel would say, "I can't *think* what that awful smell is by the river," and one after another the others would come in making similar and stronger remarks, Ennismore looking all the time like the cat who ate the canary!

He showed good sport while he hunted the Duhallow. On one occasion, when it seemed to him necessary to dig out a fox, reported mangy, a badger and her young had first to be dug out of the earth, and after that the fox—the only time I have ever seen such a thing.

My first hunt in Ireland will never be forgotten. The Colonel was resting after his journey, and I rode a mare of my brother's, who impressed on me that I was to stop at nothing, as this mare could jump that country. In spite of this, when the first awful bank loomed into sight I couldn't believe I was meant to jump it. I am not even ashamed to say that I funked and pretended it was the mare, much to her owner's disgust. Suddenly I saw a mere child—the youngest Miss Becher—on a little jennet go for this bank as big as a house. "Come hup!" cried she, and hop went the jennet on to the top of the bank, changed feet like lightning, and off again. For very shame I

had to follow, and, finding how easy it was on a mare that knew her job, became reconciled to the future. Not that I ever *liked* a stone-faced bank, which gives most English horses a nasty scrape of the fetlock just as they go over, not knowing better, poor brutes! And then if you listened to your English groom and put Friar's Balsam on it you could say good-bye to hunting for some time.

The Colonel gave himself a light scrape one day, though pretty good at banks; indeed, he must have been of Irish extraction by the way he jumped.

I couldn't raise a mount anywhere for the next meet within distance. At last one was found for me, straight out of the shafts of an outside car. It was the weirdest-looking object of a horse, just changing its coat, and with big "spectacles" round its eyes, and tufts of dark hair all over it in unexpected places, bumpy legs, etc. I was almost ashamed to get up, but, having arrived at the meet, I had to. Then the reason for the scarcity of horses dawned on me. The Lord-Lieutenant and the whole party from Dublin Castle were staying at Convamore for the meet, and all turned out as if in Leicestershire, Lady Sophie Scott and Lady Lurgan looking as neat as two pins, and very well mounted. I tried to persuade myself I didn't mind, but I did. Especially when Mai West and a couple of others I knew chaffed me from an outside car. Once we started all was well, for my curious mount could go.

MR. POWLETT AND HOUNDS, BY BEN MARSHALL.

What distances we went sometimes! We could get a car to drive fourteen miles to a meet, but had to ride back, and as often as not it was twenty miles or more home.

Wet to the skin one late afternoon, I asked an old Irishwoman with a black shawl over her head: "How far to Mallow?" "Sure and is it miles ye mane?" was her reply. They usually told me several miles less than my destination, just to hearten me up, and lied from sheer sympathy. But they were a proud and hospitable people in those days, to whom it was a real insult to offer a tip did you shelter in their cabin or accept their help. Horses were the beginning and end of life to them, and what marvels of horse-keepers they were! We spoke with a farmer once and inquired after a horse he had. "It's better he is, and I hope to race him at the meeting." The horse was then at grass, for we saw him, but he ran all right a week later and nearly won! There is something in the quality of the grass which keeps a horse fit even when turned out, and one has only to see the way the gossoons, or young fellows, follow hounds on a mount taken out of the field that morning, and that would go back to the field in the evening, to realise that there *is* a difference. Perhaps the limestone, perhaps the climate. Who can say?

Two of these gossoons were riding near me one day during a run, and one said to the other: "Is it hungry that y'are, Larry?" "Faith, and it's

hungry I am," said Larry, and looked it; and at a check I saw them off their horses, each devouring a raw swede from the field.

Mallow was a great centre for horses, and several dealers lived near. There was also a landowner in the neighbourhood who had made a *spécialité* of breeding disease-proof potatoes. I once wrote and asked him to send me a small consignment to

England, and they turned out very well. Sad to relate, experience had shown me that if I signed my initials only and not my Christian name, I invariably received a more businesslike letter in return. Following my usual practice, I was rewarded by a delightful story in one of the letters from Mallow. What it had to do with potatoes I cannot remember, nor even the name of the writer. But the story has remained.

Mike was nearing a shebeen one day when he saw friend Pat reeling out of it and shouted to him: "Is

it good the shtuff is, Pat?" "Good is it," replied Pat. "See the way I am for tuppence."

No one but myself ever noticed the marvellous colour of the hills in spring—just like the Mediterranean, with purple and blue shadows from the clouds on the emerald green of the hills. In an unguarded moment I "enthused" to a certain gunner, saying: "How lovely the hills look!" He answered shortly: "Never look at scenery in the huntin' season." And I felt squashed.

I had never a fall, but, jumping down into a road over a wall, I gave myself a rick, I suppose with gripping my crutch too hard. The pain got gradually worse until, as we jogged home, it was all I could do to sit on my horse. My companions, I grieve to say, left me in the cold and went on—perhaps they did not know how bad I was—and I was just about to fall out of the saddle when the kind Master of the United came up with his hounds. He lifted me gently down and produced a vehicle from somewhere, and I got home and to bed. Next day I couldn't move my leg, and an enterprising friend said I must have strained the rider's muscle and advised me to tie a surcingle round my leg and carry it (the leg) about with me, as it were, by slinging the other end of the surcingle round my neck. Which I did, and was able to get upstairs and about. The day after was the last hunt of the season, and I was determined to go out, surcingle and all.

I mounted, and all went fairly well. Hounds found, and to get away I had to put my horse at the same kind of wall and drop into the road. As I did it something gave, or broke, in my leg. I gave a short shriek of pain, and lo! I was cured and never felt it again. I never knew what it was, nor have I ever met a woman who had done such a thing in a side-saddle.

One day brother said: "We're going with the harriers to-day. Don't turn your nose up like that; they've got a deer to hunt."

Imagine a fine, warm March day, golden gorse out on the hills and the snowy blackthorn on the banks. The field was as shabby as it was sporting. We had thirty-five minutes of the best after the deer, who then was roped and held till the cart could come up, as explained to me carefully. We ate our sandwiches and waited about, and I couldn't think why we didn't get a move on. Suddenly (of course, a pure accident) the deer escaped, and we again had a merry spin of some thirty minutes, after which the van did appear and the deer was taken home, none the worse for the outing, and quite friendly with the hounds.

It was very thirsty work in that hot sun, after two hard gallops, and brother stopped me just in time a I was about to drink the burn water. "You'll be poisoned," he said, and made me wait till we came to a small inn, and there we could get nothing but porte

to drink. It was rather salt, and made things worse than ever. That night I knew thirst for the first and only time in my life ; it was not a pleasant experience. They say I drank six syphons of soda !

On the way back from this hunt we "happened" to pass a fox covert, and the hounds just "happened" to go into it, and "happened" on a fox ! No one protested, and we had a very fast gallop over good country, getting home quite late in the afternoon. But what a day ! Never have I seen more real fun and enthusiasm, and it's marked with a white stone in my memory, in spite of the carted deer.

Never did I so regret leaving a country to go home ; a country where the inhabitants set out in the morning to enjoy themselves and have a good time, and thoroughly succeed. It mattered not a pin that their bridles were tied up with string, appearance being the last thing they cared about. One girl, a fine rider, daughter of a man who bred racehorses, used to get up and milk cows at five and make butter, and she hunted all day, and danced all night with the best. An old man who lived too many miles away to count, used to drive his horse to the meet in a gig with his saddle at the back. He saddled him up, and hunted him all day, and then put him in the gig and drove him home ! "Sure and it's a fine change for the crathur," he said.

Fermoy is a pretty little whitewashed town on the Blackwater, that good salmon river. I have seen a

salmon lying on a rock in mid-stream with a great hole in him. They said an otter had done it.

The church was in the middle of the one street, and one day the leaders of the gunners' coach (gunners were quartered in Fermoy) took it into their heads to turn into the church door, and indeed they did get partly in!

Something in the climate seems to go to the heads of soldiers quartered in Ireland. Never have I seen such a merry lot as those gunners. They asked brother and me to drive with them to some point-to-point races. What a drive! "Don't be nervous, Mrs. Martineau. One of the horses has been in harness before!" Every few minutes the horses jibbed, and the coach load scrambled down and turned the wheels so that the horses had to move on. However, in time we got to the meeting and had great fun. At the end of the afternoon I saw a fight "wid the shticks." I heard a curious rattling noise, and found a small crowd of about twenty men with their blackthorns held well above their heads and all whacking away, and the noise was the clashing of the shillelaghs. I didn't see anyone hurt at all!

When the horses' heads were turned homewards there was quite a different story; they pulled like mad! We were to be dropped at Convamore, and by the time we got there Major Stebbing, our whip, had his hands so numbed by these tearing horses that as we turned into the gates he dropped the reins and

THE MEET: FOX-HUNTING, BY J. FERNELEY.

the horses took to the turf at a gallop. He couldn't have lost hold entirely, for he was able to pull them up as we neared the door. The grass was badly cut up, and we lived in dread of a scolding, but the episode was so funny that everyone laughed instead. Not many of those cheery boys are alive to-day, but I did meet one of them, the maddest and merriest of the lot, just after the war. He had become a stiff Brigade-General with a wife and appeared to have entirely forgotten Fermoy days!

Lovely Convamore was set in a blaze of rhododendrons above the river and was burned by the Sinn Feiners. No one was living there at the time but Miss Becher, Lord Listowel's niece. The men gave her fifteen minutes to dress and then burned the house. They admitted they had no grudge against his lordship, who, indeed, was the kindest of landlords, but it was a reprisal for a farm that had been recently burned by the Black and Tans.

These marauders were never local men; they went out in a special train from Dublin armed to the teeth to burn and destroy. All the houses I used to stay in are burned down—Convamore, Bessborough, Mullaboden, Shanes Castle, and many another. The only one left that I knew is Castle Upton, and as it was built by King Stephen, it was thought the house with its great walls wouldn't burn!

When the news of the burning reached Lord Listowel in London he never said a word till after a

dinner-party they were giving was over, and when the guests had gone he told her ladyship! He was, indeed, a gallant man, who when quite a young officer in the Crimean War was shot in the leg, and was found stumping along with only one sound leg and almost on his knees pursuing the enemy with a drawn sword! He was over ninety when he died, but full of wit and humour till the end. Many were their guests, and I recall Lord and Lady Annesley, she so beautiful, Colonel "Charlie" Crichton and pretty Leila, General Fryer and his son, and Reggie Loder, the Inchiquins whose younger son married Lady Beatrice Hare, among them.

Punchestown was good fun, with everyone in tearing spirits. We went to a circus with General Fryer (another sportsman) one night, and there saw the most beautiful horse I've ever beheld. A Barb, or, possibly, an Arabian. Pure white with a pink skin, and a coat so fine that it shone like silver (anyone who has owned a white horse knows how difficult it is to get a polish), of perfect shape, and great intelligence. He gave a wonderful display, especially when dancing and moving backwards, which is a great strain on the hocks.

There was quite a unique form of advertisement at that circus. An enormously stout man sat in the front row, occupying three seats, and on his white sweater was printed an advertisement in large black letters. It certainly attracted great attention!

My husband came over to fetch me back from staying at Convamore. When I came away he said I could leave the Colonel behind with my brother, who afterwards sold him for £40, which was not at all a bad price for the old horse.

My brother had a very good-looking brown horse named Brandy, but, though a clever hunter and fast, he had only one eye. Nothing would induce his master to believe he was dangerous, and he rode him in a race while I was there, with disastrous results. As far as I recollect, he cannoned into someone or something at a fence and came a terrible smash. Another instance of the folly of riding a horse that is minus something, whether it be an eye or a nerve.

The hunt meetings in Ireland were the best of fun. Years before I went to a meeting of the Kildare Hunt at a place called Kill, as far as I remember, where we had lunch with Lord Mayo's brother, Harry Bourke, a most popular man with a fund of humour.

We all sat by a fire behind a hedge, well out of the piercing wind. A big iron pot hung gipsy fashion over the fire, in which was our lunch—the best Irish stew I ever tasted. Lindsay Fitzpatrick, who was there, did his best to persuade me to go out with the Meath next day on an excellent hireling he could really recommend. Luckily for me, I could not manage it, for I heard in the evening that it fell into a Meath ditch first go off, and had to be pulled out

with ropes, costing the unlucky rider £4—a pound a leg!—to get him out.

Bertie Cowell, who was quartered in Dublin, gave a tea-party that day for us to hear some of the men in his regiment sing. He had told us it was the most amusing entertainment in the world, and it certainly was, though not in the way he meant it. It seemed that he had coached them up well beforehand as to their behaviour, and told them that no questionable or vulgar songs would be allowed, as the ladies would not like them. So they "edited" Chevalier's songs, taking out all the slang and Cockney remarks and replacing them by what they thought really refined words instead. All the points of the songs were lost, naturally, but oh, it was so screamingly funny. "Laugh! I thought I should 'ave died."

They were so encouraged by our joy that they proceeded to a little vulgarity, and were bundled out of the room by Bertie after one about "the pleeceman breathed upon him and he died."

CHAPTER IV

ROTTEN ROW IN THE NINETIES

One of the well-known horse-dealers in London in the early nineties was Milton, who went in for a good class of horse, and, as he would let me ride his best horses for the same fee I would pay for an ordinary hireling, I was well mounted before we had horses of our own. His stables were behind Park Lane. Only once did he make a mistake, and that was in sending me a horse that stood on its hind legs the instant I was mounted. As a rearing horse was the only variety I was afraid of, I got off as quickly as I could and while I could. This fear of a rearer was because, when I was a girl, a young woman out hunting was killed by her horse rearing and falling back on her in a road, driving the pommel of her saddle through her. I did not see it happen, though I was out that day,

but a deep impression was made on me that a woman in a side-saddle has no chance at all if her horse rears and falls back. The surface of the Row was kept very badly at that time, and once when riding a particularly fine chestnut horse of Milton's, one that he was about to show, I felt him stumble and go dead lame. We were near the top of the Row, and Milton's man was standing there, very luckily, as we found the poor horse had his hoof partly torn off, having wedged his foot between two bricks as we cantered up. He was laid up for months. I always thought that Milton should have claimed against the Park authorities, as the bricks under a thin coating of sand were not even properly laid.

The purchase of our first horse was quite an event, and very unexpected. My brother, Frank Vaughan Williams, who had the Tedworth Hounds at that time, was selling all his horses at the end of the season, and my husband and I were with him watching them sold. He suddenly said to my husband: "Look here, why don't you buy the Colonel? He's quite sound, except that he gets corns now and again, well mannered, and a good hunter, and you'd always have something to ride in the Row." He was 16·2, a big horse, a golden-coloured chestnut, and my husband suddenly made up his mind to have him, and we got him for £40 or so. And a good buy it was, for it meant that his master got regular exercise, while I rode him occasionally. He lived in a stable opposite

MISS MARY ARABELLA MUSTERS, BY BEN MARSHALL.

o us in Lyall Street with our hireling brougham orse. And *what* a joy it was to own a horse! We ook him down to Norfolk in September to a small hoot we had, and I got a few days' cub-hunting with Mr. Charlie Seymour's hounds, that most urbane and opular master. Neither the Colonel nor I liked urnips, of which we had plenty, for I think they ouched up his corns. Those corns were a great uisance, for he had to wear special shoes with leather n them.

Many and odd were the mounts lent me for the Row. I remember riding a peculiarly piglike polo ony brought over by Charlie Mendel from the Argentine, in the days when the word Argentine ent every horseman's nose up in the air. How ifferent from to-day when we think of the superb onies owned by Louis Lacey and bred at the "John Argentine" ranch. He showed us ten at Hurlingham B.A., all of the ten as like as peas in a pod. Or the Martinez de Hos" ponies, which we saw at his anch near Mar del Plata. They have a way of reeding them there which is of interest. They breed rom big stock, at the wrong season, and at such a ime as the young stock will get but scant rations, so hecking their growth. Not that the grass in the Argentine is ever scant as we know it; but still, it is heir winter instead of summer. In this way they et a horse of 15 hands or more, instead of 16·2, but vith all the quality of their racing parents.

The Row of to-day looks to me to be a very different place to what it was. Myriads of children ride, and young women from the theatres, and—on Saturday afternoons and Sundays—from behind the counters.

In old days it was like a club—one knew most people—and there were very few children riding. Being short-sighted, I was a little unlucky at times—as, for instance, when I said, "How de do, Mr. Tree?" to someone that I took to be the eminent actor I often rode with. "Madam, I am not Mr. Tree." And I rode away crestfallen to the far side of the Park, where at last I saw Mr. Tree, as I thought, to whom I proceeded to relate the occurrence as a great joke. "Madam, I am *still* not Mr. Tree," was the response I got!

Many people do I recall—the dapper Mr. Chapman, such a good rider, and one who, though he sold horses, never sold a man; Charlie Crichton from Kildare; Maunsell Richardson, "the Cat," a great steeple-chase rider, with his wife, Lady Victoria Yarborough, a sister of Lord Listowel's.

The Cat asked me one day if I'd like to buy a hack he had seen, which I could have on trial. I rode it and found it all that he described. This was on a Friday. On Saturday, as I was leaving town, I lent it to Miss Massey Mainwaring, a big, red-haired girl who drove a coach and was a reputedly fine rider.

On Monday I returned to a tale of woe. The erfect hack had taken Miss Mainwaring down some rea steps and was quite unmanageable, etc. I had er saddled at once and got her all right into the 'ark. Then the trouble began. Never have I ridden uch a jade. I took her into the quiet end of the Row near the barracks, and she bucked and kicked nd tried to rub me off against the trees, or the railings n the other side. Finally she began to rear. I ppealed for help to a dealer I knew, but he gave me very wide berth and, like the Pharisee, passed by n the other side. Then I became aware of a panting room—mine—who had pursued me on bus and foot or fear of trouble. Without any hesitation I got ff, and we all walked home!

I always thought the mare had been doped, both when the Cat saw her and when she first came up, nd that when the effects wore off she showed herself n her true colours.

No dangerous horses should ever be ridden in the Row. As a rule they become so bored that it's difficult to kick them along. Budbrook, my old teeplechaser, generally so well mannered—though he pulled out hunting—was once the exception to this ule.

This was when riding with Lord and Lady Listowel (she on her pretty grey mare). His Lordship asked f I knew of a quiet hack. I laughingly said: "You'd better buy Budbrook; he is just the thing."

As if he had heard me and resented it, Budbrook without the slightest warning, started off as thoug the flag had fallen. He was into his stride at onc and fled down the Row at his best racing pace, turn ing off at Albert Gate. As we neared the Frenc Embassy I had to make a quick decision, whether t let him crash into the traffic at Knightsbridge, or tak my chance of the iron railings if I pulled his hea round, for I couldn't stop him. I chose the latter, and leaning well forward, wrenched his head round. H come down with a crash on the stones, but missed th railings. It must have been something of a crash, fo two neat, round holes were stamped out of the knee of my habit. The horse was hardly scratched, and though I was bleeding from one or two cuts, I insisted on mounting again and riding home, the truth being that I was terribly afraid of losing my nerve if I gav in, and, though I really felt very shaken and queer I persisted.

But it was a sad day for me, for I was never allowed to ride Budbrook again, and we sold him at once t Hughie Harrison in the Grenadiers for what he ha cost. Strangely enough, something of the sort hap pened again. Lord Listowel had often seen m husband riding his charming hack Modjeska in th Park, and, as he'd had bad luck with his own and w had one or two, it was suggested he should come an look at the mare when we were in Berkshire, whic he did. She was brought round to the front doo

nd admired, and the groom told to trot her round. She, who was as sober as old Time and a matron vith two children, did what I never knew her to do before or after—started kicking. And, kicking uriously, proceeded, one might say, on her fore legs down the drive. Listowel never ceased chaffing me bout my quiet hacks.

People rode at three different times in the day. Before breakfast, as to-day, business men—the liver brigade—went out. Then one rode either before unch or before dinner, between eleven and one, or from five to seven. In those quieter days, when men did not work so hard, the Row was full of girls, their chaperones, and their partners of the night before, and double rows of chairs were filled with one's friends watching the riders. Lunch was never till two o'clock, and if I rode home at one or after there was still time to dress. The evening ride was even pleasanter, for it was cooler, and one went home to one's tub before dinner.

As time went on and motor-cars came in, expeditions and golf took the place of the evening ride, which went completely out.

People were often glad to lend a hack then—most of them hire their mounts to-day—and I once offered Charlie Windham, afterwards Admiral Windham, a ride. He was a great grouser, and was grumbling one day that he never could afford one and that no one ever mounted him. Like all sailors, he adored

riding, but wasn't much of a horseman. He said he'd like to ride at nine o'clock. I thought, of course, he'd be back at eleven, but no—he galloped up and down the Row from nine till one, and the mare had to stay in for a couple of days to recover from that pounding. Charlie Windham was captain of the *Osborne*, the Prince of Wales's yacht, and we stayed with him occasionally. He told us that once when he took the Prince and Princess of Wales to Dublin there was some civic function, and a book was produced for royal signatures. After H.R.H. and the Princess had signed, the Lady Mayoress was offered the pen. She glanced at the signatures just written, "Edward" and then "Alexandra," and timidly wrote "Fanny" below!

Thinking of sailors recalls a letter I had during the war. A really kind man, quartered at Gibraltar, took the trouble to write to me, a stranger, to tell me he'd seen my sailor son Brian and all about him. In those anxious days, when one was allowed no news, the joy of getting such a letter may be imagined. But he went on to say: "Your son is the first sailor I ever met who spoke the truth. He said he could ride."

This benefactor kept horses and used to give midshipmen rides when they came to Gibraltar. I fancy he'd had some queer experiences with the riding of the others. But the boon it was to the snotties and young officers only those who had been cooped up

MRS. HOUSTON FRENCH ON CONNIE.

or weeks at a time in their ship ever knew, or how rateful they were to feel a horse between their knees nd get a gallop again.

Brian, my second son, who was at Dartmouth when he war broke out, was appointed to the old cruiser *Europa*, much to his disappointment, for nearly all he rest of his "term" had gone to *Aboukir*, *Hogue*, nd *Crécy*, but *Europa* was not ready for sea. When he other three cruisers were torpedoed in the first ew days of the war and all, or nearly all, his term ost, one can never be sufficiently grateful to old *Europa* for just being old. He had exceptionally ood hands from his first introduction to a pony, and wonderful eye for country, managing somehow or ther to be always "there" or thereabouts.

Other people one used to ride with in the Row were George Alexander, always so charming and not et knighted; Ernest Helme on his father's staid oan cob; Cuckoo Belleville as she then was, and her great friend Jeffie Bainbridge, now Mrs. Darell, in uch neat habits; Mrs. Houston French (Lady French) on Connie, her lovely dark chestnut hack; Miss Anne Newton, famous as the lady whose horse olted the length of the Row and then jumped the Park railings, much higher than they are now; and many others. It was a great innovation when one or wo women who had been in India or Egypt took to iding in white linen coats and straw hats or panamas n hot days—a fashion very generally copied as a

great relief from tight-fitting cloth habits, stocks, and either top-hats or bowlers. I can remember when I first rode in the Row that men wore, especially for the evening ride, tightly fitting trousers, black coats, and silk hats—quite *en grand tenue*.

CHAPTER V

HUNTING FROM RUGBY AND A SEASON WITH THE WHADDON CHASE FROM LONDON

When later I came with my own horses to hunt from Rugby, staying with that good all-round sportsman, Roy Savile, and his wife at Bilton, I found that Mr. Willie Wroughton, who was unfortunately killed out hunting last year, had succeeded Lord Spencer as Master of the Pytchley. I had always felt grateful to him for having in my horseless days given me a ride in the Row on a big chestnut of his. A very fiery animal it was, too, under my light weight, and though I completed my ride, I was advised not to borrow him again! Mr. Wroughton was always very nice to me out hunting, though I got in his way badly on one shameful occasion when my mare A1 was pulling double, and he rated me in a curiously

high-pitched voice. He was quite right, and I hope it did me good. His death was very sad, although he had always hoped he would hunt till the day of his death. And he did.

Roy Savile was Master of the West Kent Foxhounds at one time. Since he left the Pytchley country he has taken to yachting and sailing instead of hunting. Good at all sports and games, he is supposed to have won more cups in more varied ways than any other man.

I had three horses at Bilton—A1, my big brown Irish mare; Miladi, a much lighter mare, but a very perfect fencer; and a chestnut, who was such a dangerous runaway in the saddle that I used her in a cart for driving to meets. These three all came from John O'Donnell, a horse dealer near Mallow. A1 was a fine performer but hard to hold. She had carried me well the season before with the Whaddon Chase, and her jumping of the disagreeable doubles in the Vale of Aylesbury was a treat, while there was nothing she enjoyed more than a gallop over that famous three-hundred-acre field called Creswell, and never minded heavy going.

Harry Bentley (Gently Bentley) rather admired her when I rode her with the Pytchley, and thought he would like to try her. So I went over to stay at Harborough with him and his nice wife, and he rode A1 while I rode a hireling. I had always supposed H. B. to be a hard man to hounds, and had often seen him

THE LATE W. WROUGHTON, M.F.H. (THE PYTCHLEY) ON CHESTER.

go out of his way to jump when it was unnecessary. However, he could not get on at all with A1, and told me afterwards I had gone up considerably in his estimation as a rider since he had ridden my horse!

I liked the hireling so much that was provided for me that I bought her for £50. She made a slight noise, but it did not stop her, and she was a lovely mare to ride, as easy as an armchair. Black-brown, 16·2 high, and said to be by Common. Anyhow, she was very like him. I didn't even trouble to have her vetted as she had carried me so well in a long hunt. Perhaps a vet would have found out she had been unnerved, which I never did till she nearly killed me the following season. Whether the dealer who sold her to me knew is another question, but I ought to have suspected something more than the slight noise.

Anyway, I bitterly regretted having kept her instead of A1, who even though she pulled was a sound, reliable mare. Why I nearly always had mares I can't think. Looking through an old horse book, where I kept names and prices paid and received, I could only find five that were not of the female sex out of a great many. It was just chance.

I was able to hunt with several packs from Rugby besides the Pytchley. The North Warwickshire, the Atherstone, and the Warwickshire on Thursdays, and what a stiff bit of country lies below Shuckborough getting into the Bicester country! Big

stake-and-bound fences with deep ditches. And how one had to gallop for a place from Shuckborough. Still, no more than in the Pytchley, where many thrusters raced for the first fence or even gate.

Not so long ago hounds killed a deer by some sad misadventure in Shuckborough. The same tragedy occurred the next week, much to the anger of the owner. Shortly after, someone, who writes under the *nom de plume* of Sabretasch, said something to this effect in his paper:

"Out with the Warwickshire, Thursday. Oh dear, oh *dear*, oh DEAR!"

One Wednesday we had a good run from Welford and its laurel covers, and got eventually to the river Leame, where there was a narrow bridge, wooden, and supposedly for foot passengers. Mr. Muntz—a great heavy man who bred Shire horses and rode hunters almost as big—trotted on to this bridge followed by half a dozen men and women. Suddenly it broke, and all of them were flung into the stream below. It was really a funny sight to see them, horses and all, splashing about and making odd noises. Why no one was hurt was a miracle; one felt ashamed of one's laughter, but it was impossible to contain it.

A few days after this I rode Miladi, my bay mare, to a meet, sending A1 on. Miladi was an extraordinarily pretty thing, being well bred, with small deer-like head, and arched neck kept hogged. She

jumped like a deer, but was bad-tempered in the stable.

Hounds moved off quickly before I had time to change, we found at once, and Miladi carried me well in a fast run. I was, however, cursed with very short sight, and, seeing a low fence in front of me, made for it, although everyone else was making for a bridge lower down. The fence was quite low, and we went at it slowly. When in mid-air I found we had the Hilmorton Brook below us and a terrific drop. I knew no more till I woke up in someone's pink drawing-room.

The tale, I later heard, was this. The mare crashed and I fell on my head. She, however, was all right and set to work to kick me as I lay on the ground. (I knew she was vicious in the stable.) Several men who were behind me saw what was going on, and though it had the reputation of being an unjumpable place, one gallant fellow said that it was more than he could stand to see a woman kicked to death. He crammed his horse over, and beat Miladi off with his whip! (She was sold to the Army after this.)

I was moved to the house of my kind friends, the Saviles, who nursed me till I could go back to town. Beyond having torn away the muscles of my shoulder, I was not much hurt. I subsequently had to go to a torture chamber, known as Benson's, to break down the adhesions that had formed, owing to a London doctor's mistaken idea that my arm should be put

in a sling instead of using it; and I once asked the Chief Torturer which bore pain the best, men or women? He grinned and said the men swore and shouted the roof off, but the ladies bore it silently till the sweat poured off their faces with the agony! Good Dr. Wharton-Hood soon got me right, and the day came when he said I might ride about with my arm in a leather sling. "I never saw her again," as he bitterly said to a friend. Of course, I started hunting at once, so as not to lose another day.

Dear Bettine, Lady Wilton, had given me a standing invitation to hunt from Egerton Lodge whenever I liked, so with my strapped arm I went down to Melton and had Ladybird sent over as easiest to ride. Lady Wilton gave me into her brother-in-law's charge, "Puggy" Riddell, a great thruster. I followed him for a bit, and just as I was going at a fair speed down an incline to get over one of the big Leicestershire bottoms, someone on a chestnut (I heard it was Lord Manvers) cut in and stopped me. Ladybird was much put out, and when I tried her again at it she came down with me. She certainly did not like being checked at her fences, and did this again the next season. I was terribly hampered by my arm, and had much difficulty in mounting after the fall. By the time I had mounted, the hounds had gone, and I never saw them or my pilot again. Lord Lonsdale had just given up the hounds, and Captain Burns Hartopp, a Cambridge

A MEET OF THE WARWICKSHIRE AT WROXTON ABBEY.

friend of my husband's, was Master of the Quorn. Egerton Lodge was a really comfortable house to stay in, and the chef a wonder. Arthur Prior, Lady Wilton's husband, saw to that. His stories were sometimes rather too spicy, but his cook never erred. What a rider Lady Wilton must have been in her day! She and her favourite hunter made a lovely picture. At that time she used to drive with me to the meet, ready to hunt, but I don't think she mounted—just drove about a bit and went home. She was full of fun, and the recipient of many secrets. A famous row was going on just then between two ladies over Peter Flower, each one confiding in Lady Wilton, who was very amusing about it. Peter Flower must have had some hidden charm that none of the rest of us could see by the way the ladies fought for him. Puggy Riddell was the originator of a story Lord Listowel was very fond of telling later on. Motor-cars had just come in, and Lord and Lady Listowel were sitting in the tonneau of theirs, with Riddell, who in clumsy French (as the chauffeur could hear) was trying to ascertain if the chauffeur would do for him. "Essker il mange avec vous," he began. That was answered, but when it got to "And esserker il dort avec vous" (to Lady Listowel), this was too much for "His Lordship." "Certainly not, and that'll *do!*"

I must put it on record that the farther away did one get from London when hunting the pleasanter

did the people become. On the few occasions that I hunted with the Quorn I was quite astonished at the cordial way in which I was received. People would come up and say : "Oh, Mrs. Martineau, *how* nice to see you out with us—do hope you will come often," and so on.

The Pytchley had a fine huntsman in John Isaacs, one of two celebrated brothers. Charles Isaacs went to Mr. Fernie's. This I found a pleasant country to ride over, inclined to be hilly—well, hardly hilly ; wavy, perhaps, would best describe it. Frank Belleville mounted me on this occasion. People were very kind about putting one up, and I stayed once or twice with the Loders at Cottesbrooke, belonging then to Sir Herbert Langton. A fine house, and very centrally situated for the best meets of the Pytchley. Lady Margaret Loder is a daughter of Lord and Lady Listowel, my old friends from the Duhallow country, and was very keen at that time. Among other ladies who hunted with the Pytchley were Mrs. Arthur Byas, who went well ; Mrs. Jock Trotter, a very perfect horsewoman ; Mrs. Fenwick, who had been Sylvia Grey ; pretty Cissie Bentley, who I don't think cared really for the sport ; the Thorntons, and many, many others, whose names I can't recall. But all very nice to me and good with hounds. The Campbell Johnstone twins were inseparable, and the death of one of them recently, Colonel Bruce, was a great blow to his brother.

Old Captain Beatty was a great character, and ›wned the land round Hilmorton. Up to the time ›f my severe fall at the Hilmorton Brook I had never ıad a bad fall out hunting. But after that I had two nore the same season, caused, I feel sure, by my feel-ng so hampered by having only one arm to use, the ›ther still being in a leather sling, and doubtless, hough unconsciously, being afraid of hurting it again. t could not have been nerves, for when one is sud-lenly knocked out one mercifully knows and remem-›ers nothing, and is therefore unafraid next time. The ıext season I had two more falls, both with Ladybird, naking three to her discredit.

I attribute my good fortune not to luck, but to the act that I always rode horses well over my weight. I veighed 9 st. 6 lbs., but most of my horses were up o 14 st., and I hardly ever remember riding home a ired horse, or riding one to a standstill, even though could not jump off and on as readily as do the girls f to-day. But unless the horse were very big, I could lways get on by putting him in a ditch and getting n from the road, even if I could not climb him by engthening the stirrup, which I often did.

I had sampled the Whaddon Chase for one season, ut with the exception of the Master, Bill Selby owndes, I never had a civil word from a soul. The Master was the only person I ever met who demurred t the thought of taking a subscription from a lady, nd was quite hurt when I insisted on paying one.

The sport was certainly excellent there, but the amenities were few. I went on to the Pytchley, and though that was certainly better it was not to be compared to the Quorn as regards cordiality. However, as my youngest brother Bertie and I kept our horses together and went down from town together to Leighton, it was not so bad. Such funny things used to happen sometimes. Once I was going up after hunting and the train was full, with the exception of a carriage which was locked on one young man. Rather than be left behind or going in a crowded third I insisted on having the carriage unlocked.

The young man was furious, and when we started, said: "Have you any objection to my taking off my clothes?" At first I thought he was an escaped lunatic, but then I realized he meant in his confusion to say "change my clothes." I looked him full in the eye and said very coldly: "Not in the least as long as you go in there," pointing to a small compartment. He reached for his bag sheepishly, walked in, and came out later in a very new volunteer uniform!

Another day my brother had been on duty till the last minute and was obliged to change into hunting kit in the train. He threw a paper on the seat opposite mine. "Keep it for me," he said, and dashed into the compartment marked "Vacant." Presently three men got in. One wanted the corner seat. I explained it was taken. When the train began to move he couldn't see why he could not have

HENRY, THIRD EARL OF LONSDALE, BY J. FERNELEY.

t. I was thankful when the sandy head and pink coat of my brother appeared just as he was getting very insistent.

Oh, those early starts from London! The feverish excitement which made breakfast impossible, the dash to Euston, the long, tiring day, and journey back. How easy it all is with the motors and clubs of to-day! I found the best thing to eat for breakfast was a tiny bit of beefsteak, which I forced down and which sustained me to a certain extent. Sandwiches I couldn't abide, and preferred a bit of plum cake or a scone and cheese for my lunch-case.

What a well-gated country is the Vale of Aylesbury, and with always a man to open each gate (waiting for Leopold Rothschild's half-crown, which was unfailing). One could go from anywhere to anywhere across grass fields. As a matter of fact, there were only the two main roads, and one was obliged to cut across fields to get home.

My Irish mare was very clever in negotiating doubles, those dreadful things where you have to change feet on a bank after one big jump and then take another leap.

As I said, I knew very few people, but Parson Jack Milne was always cheery whenever we met. He had been at the Varsity with my husband. One day when hounds were running he suddenly said he must go; he had to take a funeral! He was in mufti—rat-catcher is, I believe, the correct term—and moved

off unwillingly. Always keen and a good rider, he afterwards gave up his living and became Master of the Cattistock.

An old cousin of my father's, Mr. Nannau, was of the same breed, and was one of those who would take an early service in boots and breeches with surplice over them. When his bishop remonstrated and begged him to give up his living as he did not need it, he said: "Very sorry, my lord, but that extra bit o' money just pays for my second pack of hounds." The Orkneys used to hunt with the Whaddon. Lady Orkney was the celebrated and exquisite Connie Gilchrist that I remember when I was a girl. Alas! she had lost every vestige of her good looks.

The North Cotswolds were hunted for a good many years by Charlie McNeill, who did things in wonderful style, with the best of horses and all the Hunt servants very smart in pink. Major Stacey had the hounds before then. He always alluded to a certain member of the Hunt as "my leading hound," the gentleman in question invariably getting in front of the pack!

Many were the point-to-point races in the spring, and at one of them near Rugby—when we stayed with the Saviles at Bilton—we saw poor old "Squash" have rather a bad time with a florin someone had thrown him. Squash was known on every race meeting, and, having a memory for faces, had established quite a circle of acquaintances. He was a genial soul who carried a banjo, on which he was not

often heard to perform, choosing rather to keep up a racy flow of reminiscences with the occupants of the carriages ranged alongside the winning post and 'way down the course. He was a little bit of a conjurer, and, when people threw him coins, contrived to catch them or appear to catch them in his mouth, when they disappeared.

On this occasion Roy Savile threw him a shilling, which he caught in his mouth, but made a terrible "to do," saying he'd swallowed it. This was a favourite "stunt" of his to gain a little pity. No one believed him, and shouts of laughter greeted his grimace. But as my husband and I left, a little early to catch a train, we came upon poor old Squash some field or two away, sitting on a bank below a hedge, the picture of misery, trying to dislodge the coin. We never saw him again to ask the sequel, but have since learned that he lived on thick gruel and castor oil for a week! He was sometimes very impertinent, but always amusing.

I remember, too, a boy of some twelve years who always followed the Garth Hounds on foot with a camera, one of the first of that army of reporters who now haunt every sport and place of amusement. He used to sell his photographs to the members of the Hunt, and came over once to take our horses at Hurst Court. His name was Brooks, and he turned out quite a famous photographer in a few years, even accompanying royalty on foreign tours. His was a

clear case of unassisted individual effort, for he struck out an entirely new line.

After the Hilmorton fall my lord and master requested me to hunt at home in future, so as not to worry my friends if I intended to indulge in falls. Hitherto I had hunted in Berkshire up to Christmas, and in the Shires or Ireland after Christmas. So, except for a rare, occasional mount, I never saw the Shires again, but did my hunting with the Garth.

MAP OF THE BRAMSHILL HUNT, NOW THE GARTH.

CHAPTER VI

HUNTING WITH THE GARTH

When we first went to live in Berkshire, Mr. Garth as alive and old Brackley—said to have been the riginal of Caldicott's inimitable sketches—was hunts- ıan. Mr. Garth was immensely popular with the dies, many of whom had grown grey in the pursuit, ot alone of the fox, for he was an eligible bachelor, ıough of advanced years, when I met him. It was ıce reported in a paper that "there was a large field ut with the Garth Hounds, with a fair sprinkling of ıen." His country, which was originally the ramshill Hunt, had been very much larger at one me; but some of it had been given up to the Vine Iunt, and an interesting little map that folded into 2-inch square was given me by Mr. Van der Weyer,

showing the large extent of the original country. I was, I found, a thickly wooded country densely popu lated in parts and criss-crossed by roads. The Satur day country was usually in the heather-lands on the Surrey side or on the north-west of Maidenhead This latter became so built over that hounds eventually ceased to go there.

Old Brackley was a great lover of woodland, and much time was taken up with these woods. When one did get away, especially from Brackley, who was stout and old, a good gallop was often the result with Ted, the hard-riding and slightly deaf first whip. (I sometimes wondered if that same deafness wasn't rather convenient.)

The Hawthorn Hill country was of good grass, and I can recall a certain twenty minutes' burst up to and across it—as good as any I have ever known. It's not enough to have a horse that can creep and climb for now and again there is a run for which a Leicester shire stamp of horse is needed.

Mr. Garth lived next to us at Haines Hill and was a good neighbour, managing to keep both pheasants and foxes in his coverts. He was one of the old fashioned sort who thought a shooting lunch should consist of Irish stew alone. Old "Bob" Wilmot told me he shot there once when the Irish stew ran short, and a potato—which he wasn't allowed to touch—was his share. He eventually got a bite from one of the beaters.

There is a story told that at one of Mr. Garth's g dinner-parties there was an ominous pause before nner, and the butler, white in the face, came in to y : " Sir, the two foxhound puppies have pulled off ıe tablecloth, and every bit of china and glass is nashed." Mr. Garth only said : " I hope to God ıey haven't cut their feet."

There was another story current, but I don't elieve Mr. Garth could have been the hero. How- ver, it was said that he was once dancing at a ball hen his partner fell, and he was heard to say to mself : " Nasty, dangerous, stumbling brute !"

Ours was a much-hunted neighbourhood. We ere quite likely to get the Garth over us on a Ionday and a Wednesday, while the Queen's—after- ards the Berks and Bucks Staghounds—the Windsor rag, and the Staff College Drag were constantly in ır part of the world, and I have even known the outh Berks to run as far.

The farmers were, however, a splendid lot and ever complained, though the large fields must have one much damage. Naturally, everyone did their est for them, and many a case of whisky at Christ- as, game, and luncheons galore went their way.

The only thing I, as a small farmer, found to object was when a drag was laid across our land without ıe notice being given. For it was very disturbing the ewe flock, and I liked to get the sheep up on ese occasions.

There was one gallant old farmer, Auckland, of Zealots Hill, who always had something up his sleeve for the farmers' race at Hawthorn Hill. He once got so far in front of the rest that he did not realise he had passed the winning post, and did a second round, racing the other horses to a second finish amid uproarious cheers and laughter. The lunch must have been very good!

One day we'd had a bit of a run with the Garth when the hounds checked in a field, and we stayed in the road. Some dashing soldier lad tried to get to the hounds for no earthly reason and jumped a stile out of the road to this end. His horse muddled it somehow, turned a somersault, and fell on his rider; and the most terrible screams came from under the horse. So bad was it to listen to that most of us moved away down the road. Eventually the horse was dragged off, and his rider was found to be not much hurt—able to ride home—but from under the man emerged a hound, whose screams and yells had turned us all up. *She* wasn't hurt at all!

H.R.H. Prince Christian was a stanch supporter of the Garth, which owed much to him. He constantly came out, though he had only one serviceable eye, and was immensely heavy, riding horses up to 18 or 20 stone, one of them 18 hands high. But in spite of it all, he was a plucky rider. He once gave me a lead over a particularly ugly place, a hairy bank with a drop into the road. I happened to lunch a

H.R.H. PRINCE CHRISTIAN OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN.

ay or two later at Cumberland Lodge and compli-
ented the Princess on his courage. She looked
xedly at Prince Christian with lifted eyebrows,
hereupon he hurriedly said with much emphasis and
an awful fright: "Mrs. Martineau is quite wrong,
y dear; *I nevare jomp.*"

It seems that he was under the strictest orders
ever to jump a fence, and I had let the cat out of
ne bag. All the same, he went like fun whenever
e had the chance. He was great on Black Berkshire
igs, and named them all after Surtees' characters,
ut I only remember Ask Mama, Blue Eyes, and
Lucy Glitters. He sold me two quite good sows,
Betsey and Mulligrubs, and I did very well with them,
elling their progeny to East Africa.

There was a story, which pleased him very much,
f a man who started a model farm and said he should
eep a boar for every sow, as he wasn't going to have
ny immorality in his farmyard!

Dear Prince Christian! I can see him now hold-
ng forth on the iniquity of the Germans, who had
nade him an exile for forty years from his own
ountry, which they had seized from Denmark. "I
ate the Germans," he said emphatically. And the
ad part of it was that years afterwards and in the
eginning of the war the populace thought he was a
German. Never was there a kinder friend nor a
etter sportsman.

H.R.H. had a sense of humour. He was com-

plaining once when out hunting of the fatigue of Courts and the standing, whereupon I asked him if he did not wish sometimes he were free of it all and like the rest of us. He replied quite simply: "Ah, no. I don't think so. You see, it has its gompensations."

Mr. Van der Weyer (Victor) and I were great allies. He really lived for hunting and was out all day and every day, even though he had to be fastened into his saddle with some sort of pommel. His recollections were amusing of the days when Queen Victoria used to drive over to tea with his parents, and of how he and the other children hid when they caught sight of the royal carriage, for fear of being sent for.

He was talking of Sir Robert Wilmot one day, who had a singularly charming voice. "Charmin' fellow, Bob; charmin' voice too. In fact, I'd sooner be d——d by Bob than listen to another fellow's praise."

He said of himself: "They used to say my bark was worse than my bite, so I took to biting first and barking afterwards, and now I don't bark at all; I simply bite." He gave me the little old map, p. 68.

When Mr. Garth died, the hounds were taken over by Mr. Harry Gosling, who was devoted to hounds and loved nothing better than seeing them work. Needless to say, the rest of the Hunt would have preferred to see them working across country rather

an in woodland. Once off a horse he was a kindly, urteous person.

Getting away from the Shottesbrooke covers one y the pack divided just below White Waltham, a w couples getting away on a screaming scent to the ft. Mrs. Gosling, myself, and two or three men ere with them, while the field and the body of the ack went on and checked. It was great fun, but e soon felt we were doing the wrong thing. "Harry ill be *so* angry," said his wife, and at a slight check he began whistling to the hounds. It was one of the nniest things I've ever seen. Hounds took not the ightest notice of the whistling, and as the stranger en seemed incapable of making any hound "noises," s Sir Watkin used to call them, I essayed a few rill screams, which, though my maiden effort, had he desired effect of turning them. I don't believe e were ever found out, as everyone was busy in the overts when we arrived. Anyhow, we got ne'er a un, and I firmly believed that we were with the fox nd not they. The Garth lady pack was very good, nd Mr. Gosling improved the dog pack greatly. When I first went down there Mr. Van der Weyer old me as a great joke that a fox once ran down a ad in the middle of the dog pack, and they did not ecognise it!

A great character was the Rev. Toby Turner, who anaged the poultry fund. He was not easy to im-ose on: one cottager near us had a piteous tale of

many chickens slain. He turned on her quite testily and said: "Not at all, my good woman, it's your wretched chickens that have been killing my foxes"; and another time when my coachman's wife bitterly resented two stray hounds stealing her leg of mutton off the table, all she got was: "You ought to be very thankful it wasn't the baby they took." My husband had some shooting at White Waltham, and two litters of fox cubs were carefully tended at Sandy Warren. It used to be the prettiest sight to see some eighteen of the furry little brown cubs playing with each other and gambolling in the warm sunshine, with the primroses and bluebells carpeting Paddock Wood, where we were hidden watching. Terrible poachers all round, so my husband set up spring guns and concealed wires, but the only person who ever set them off was himself, taking a walk on a Sunday morning and bringing keepers up at the double to be terribly disappointed.

We bought a car, a Baby Peugeot, in 1903, which when my husband drove he always said "whoa" to before putting on the brakes!

I once drove in it to where I had sent on my horse, but unfortunately some other people had fixed on that spot as well. Never shall I forget their disgust and the adjectives they used in front of the word "contraption."

Personally I never had any trouble with horses when motors first came in. Instead of gathering up the

MEET OF THE GARTH AT HURST COURT (H.R.H. PRINCE CHRISTIAN IN CENTRE, AUTHOR ON GREY BOY TO LEFT).

reins and fussing when I heard one coming, I took care never to vary my feel of my horse's mouth in the slightest, and as I never took any notice of the machines as they rattled by, they didn't either. Once I saw a man jump off his push-bike and hold it firmly by the head till the car passed.

Ladybird gave me a terrible fall one day. We were all jumping over a low fence out of the Wokingham Road below Bill Hill and galloping on, when, without the smallest warning, she pitched violently down. I lay like a stone for twenty minutes, and only recovered when the order was given to take the hounds home! It was thought that she had either put her foot in a hole or trodden on a stone, and it was found that she had been unnerved, which accounted for the crash. It's only surprising she had not come to grief sooner. She was an unlucky mare, for when I sold her after this as a carriage horse to my sister (the late Lady Lauderdale), a position she filled with great credit, she broke her pastern when left in London in August, having been let out by the livery stable which had charge of her.

She was sent back to me, patched up and turned out, and got comparatively well, though lame for life; went to the stud, and then six weeks before her foal was due to arrive broke a hind leg in the stifle. We tried to keep her alive by slinging her, but it was no use. Poor Ladybird, a gentle and beautiful creature.

An old acquaintance of my youth was Frank

Goodall, who after Sir Watkin's went to the Kildare, and then to the Royal Buckhounds or Queen's, afterwards the Berks and Bucks. I don't believe he really enjoyed it after fox-hunting, but he wouldn't say so. I went out once or twice, but didn't like it a bit. I gave Leila Crichton, afterwards Lady Milbanke and then Lady Mahan, a mount with them one day. She had, of course, known Goodall all her life, and was a fine and fearless rider.

When Lord Waterford was Master of the Buckhounds, his brother, Lord Charles Beresford, often acted as Deputy Master, as Lord Waterford was not a robust man.

Lord Charles had a wonderful "way with him," a knack of getting people to do what he wanted, and the stories told of him are endless.

He was once riding next to Mrs. Houston French, now Lady French (who had an excellent grey hunter lent her for the season), when the field, or shall we say the London contingent, became more unmanageable than ever, one man trying to over-ride the hounds. "See me stop him," said Lord Charles to Mrs. French, and then shouted to the stranger: "If not for *my* sake, then for *God's* sake stop!"

Once on his way home he began larking over fences, and, on his horse jumping big, he jumped bigger still, and fell on his head! Nothing daunted, he called out: "The usual thing! The firm hands and loose seat of the sailor!"

Lord Charles called all females "Mary Ann." "Hallo, Mary Ann," he said to one woman standing at her gate, "have you seen an animal lolloping past here lately?" meaning, of course, the stag they had lost!

Many are the stories hung on Lord Charles as a peg, and indeed he was witty even for an Irishman. On one occasion the laugh was against him, though.

An American friend of mine, the late Mr. Longyear, told me he was crossing in the same boat as Lord Charles, and a man who was anxious to make his acquaintance tipped the steward to place him at the same table. He started to make himself agreeable: "Say, Lord Beresford, that's a rank bad *see*gar you're smoking—try one of mine." However, he was not a bad fellow, and the voyage ended by Lord Charles asking him to dine the day after they landed. He protested that he had no glad rags with him. "Oh, come as you like!" said Lord Charles, "only come." The dinner went off well, and a few cheerful words were spoken by one or two of the guests by way of welcome after dinner. Presently the American rose to his feet: "Gentlemen, I see you all gazing coldly at my blue suit, and truly I would wish to be dressed otherwise. But although I went round to all the costoomiers and second-hand clothes shops to-day, I couldn't hire a dress-suit anywhere for this evening; they all said the same thing—that Lord Beresford was having a big dinner to-night."

I think he scored.

Houston French (2nd Life Guards) came of a well-known Irish family. His grandfather, old Mr. French of Ardsallagh made a point of Family Prayers, coming down in hunting kit.

One day in the middle of prayers he glanced out of the window and saw the horses coming out of the courtyard. "D—— them!" he shouted. "They've taken the wrong horses on to cover. Finish the prayers yourselves," and he dashed out of the room.

He was once driving home in a very high dog-cart after hunting and offered a lift to a couple of men. They were both rather inebriated; however, he got one in front and the other behind. After a while the man beside him said: "Sorr, we've dropped Kelly!"

With so many packs so near together there was bound to be trouble sometimes. One particularly fine hound was lost, and after some time our Master had a tip that she was in a neighbouring kennel. He got her back, and the only apology was: "You should have sent for her sooner." Her loss had been made known far and wide, but some people have a curious mentality. Again, a Master who was resigning sold the perfectly good pack, and as he was bound to leave so many couple, he got an odd lot down from Leadenhall market and exchanged them at night! He was within his legal rights, and nothing could touch him.

CHESTNUT HORSES, BY BEN MARSHALL.

One of the funniest things I ever heard of happened after the war. Hounds were fearfully scarce, and every puppy worth its weight in gold. The spring was cold, and the Master of the Rufford at his wits' end to save all his puppies, as not sufficient foster-mothers could be found. So he got some broody hens and put the coops on the lawn with a puppy to each hen. No, the puppies were not fed by the hens, but out of bottles, but the strange foster-mothers kept them warm, and made an awful to do if anyone went near them. This was vouched for by Frank Bennett, his son, who said it answered quite well. I wonder if they cackled instead of giving tongue!

A very pretty rider was Lady Downshire, afterwards married to Sir Joe Laycock, and one of the pluckiest women. She was a niece of Lord Listowel and a sister of Lady Wilmot. The whole family rode, and Sir Robert's two girls were as good as men any day on either a racehorse or a hunter. There were also two families of Allfrey (a well-known name with the Pytchley). Mrs. Vere Allfrey, always young and neat on a horse, lived near us. The Hargreaves—Bob and Guy—were great supporters of the Garth when we lived in that country (and most popular), and there were always soldiers from Aldershot or Windsor.

Pretty Eileen Pigot married a soldier and went to live in the Meynell country. All the children that I

used to see hunting are married and mothers, if not grandmothers, by now.

But considering how near to London it was and how crowded, it was a very sporting country.

CHAPTER VII

THE BICESTER—THE SOUTH BERKS—THE EAST SUSSEX

Occasional days with the Bicester left me with the impression that it was a pleasant country to ride over. That is to say, one could ride at a fence in almost any part, as one could with the Cheshire in my youth. Excepting, of course, where the Bicester joins the Warwickshire and fences are very stiff.

I once stayed with the Hornsby Drakes at Wotton for hunting, and was much struck with the fact that a strong cup of soup was given to my hostess as soon as she dismounted. Doubtless the best pick-me-up anyone could have.

While out with this pack I met my old horse Budbrook again. Gifted with an eye for a horse, I

never forgot one, though I rarely remembered a human being! (How often have I bowed to a horse, only to find I did not know the rider!) On this occasion I went up to the rider and asked if it were not Budbrook he was on. "Yes," he said, but hurriedly explained he was not for sale. He went on to say that Hugh Harrison, of the Grenadiers, to whom I had sold the horse on the understanding he would never sell him to anyone but myself, had given it to him. Hughie had dropped him into a road and broken his knees, and, after patching him up, had given him on condition he was never to be sold. The old fellow looked well, but must have been a good age. I met Mr. McCalmont, his former owner, afterwards, and he was surprised to hear he was still going, and said he was sixteen at least when he sold him, and that he must be twenty-five.

Romer Williams bought him at McCalmont's sale for his looks, and sold him to me the next day in the Row for £5 profit. He was, perhaps, the best-looking horse I ever owned, and might have stood for the description of Soapy Sponge's horse "Ercles," only that he was a bay. "Powerful, 16 hands, with an arched neck, and crest, well set-on clean lean head, and loins that looked as if they could shoot a man into the next county."

He had won several steeplechases and was a terrific puller. Thanks to a tip given me by Captain Beresford, I found I could hold him in a Pelham Mohawk

t, a contraption with a series of rubber balls over the ngue, which even a horse with a tender mouth can and. The Mohawk snaffle is not a bit of use ; it must e a Pelham. I rode many pullers in it, and always ccessfully. Budbrook was a superb timber jumper, d it was like sitting in an armchair to ride him over mber or jumps, so smoothly did he negotiate them. had a good day with him once in Surrey, where I w a curious happening. Hounds were running fast, d side by side with us, but on the other side of the dge ran the Burstow in full cry after another fox. fter a couple of fields they branched off, and we w them no more.

I had one or two very good days in Surrey on udbrook, escorted by the Bernie Greenwell of those ys, now Sir Bernard, of Marden Park, where his ther, Sir Walpole, was always so hospitable to us all, d where Budbrook's timber jumping was so vastly lmired.

I also took him occasionally to hunt with the South erks, a sporting pack with a sporting Master, Hughie e Burgh, who always showed us plenty of fun, while lds were small and farmers kind. Mrs. de Burgh as of great assistance to her husband. She was very od looking, with a delightful voice, and when the owd in the road heard her charming voice say, Way for the Master, *please*," it simply melted to t him through. I remember giving my brother-in-w Cyril a ride on Budbrook with the South Berks.

I don't believe he enjoyed it a bit, and was so stiff the next day he could hardly move. I rode my husband's chestnut, Colonel, who in the middle of a run objected very much to a low but stout stake-and-bound fence with a ditch "to" us. He refused again and again till at last we were left alone in the field. I then took him to a gate which had resisted everyone's attempts to open it, and, just as I was contemplating dismounting to try and lift it off the hinges, I felt the Colonel stiffen up as if he meant to jump, and lo! he hopped over it without the least difficulty. It was a far worse jump than the fence, but one can never get to the bottom of a horse's mentality. I never knew him refuse before or after. Most horses dislike gates, but we had one pony who simply revelled in them. She was a grey about 14·3, called Aunt Jack, dappled and smooth like a rocking-horse, and we took her down to East Sussex, where my husband had a shooting of Lord Ashburnham's.

I used to hunt Aunt Jack with Charles Egerton's hounds, and one got lots of fun as long as one avoided the thousand-acre wood at Battle. There were any number of small gates, called heave-gates locally, that Aunt Jack took as a matter of course, and with the greatest ease just lifted herself—and me—over them.

I have not found as a rule that horses manifest any very great intelligence, but Aunt Jack was one of the exceptions, and was positively uncanny in her instinc-

H.M. QUEEN MARIE OF ROUMANIA RIDING A BIG ENGLISH HUNTER, CALLED WHEATLAND, AT SINAIA.

ive knowledge of the way the fox had gone. At irst I was inclined to follow some of the regular Sussex hunting folk, who were scampering along a quashy lane to get into a small spinney. We had quite an argument about it, and Aunt Jack won. It eemed so extraordinary that the little mare, who was very keen, should so resolutely determine to take a ight-hand track when the rest were going straight head, that after this short difference of opinion I let ner go her own way, and in no time at all we were vith hounds and the rest nowhere. As she was right on several other occasions, I eventually relied on her unning, and she never failed me.

That warm, unchristian glow of delight when other people have been left behind! What a curious and wholly satisfactory feeling it was! Friends that one would have shared one's meagre lunch with, and gladly, or been thoroughly unselfish to in every way, yet the thrill of finding them outdistanced or outwitted in some way was certainly present, even if unacknowledged.

Aunt Jack was very slow in harness, but if she caught sight of a bicycle she would race it for miles for the sheer fun of the thing.

While we were at Burwash my brother got me a couple of horses from Tom O'Donnell, the Mallow horse-dealer, as we wanted a good pair of ride and drive animals about 15·1. They were an ill-sorted pair when they came—one a sweet, pretty roan, and

the other a nervous, ewe-necked chestnut. The roan went tender in no time and eventually showed signs of navicular, and the chestnut pulled away from the pole to such an extent that she came in lame each time they were driven together. It was a very annoying trick as in single harness she was sound.

Some years later I had a mare who did the same thing, and we could never remedy it, try as much as we liked by altering coupling, etc.

My first hunt on the chestnut was nearly my last of any kind, and certainly my last on her. Never have I ridden such a fiend. She went like the proverbial lamb to the meet, but the minute the grass was beneath her feet she got the bit between her teeth and bolted. By leaning forward with a strong pull on the near side I managed to keep going round a field which was fenced with barbed wire. Round and round she went till she nearly dropped (and myself too).

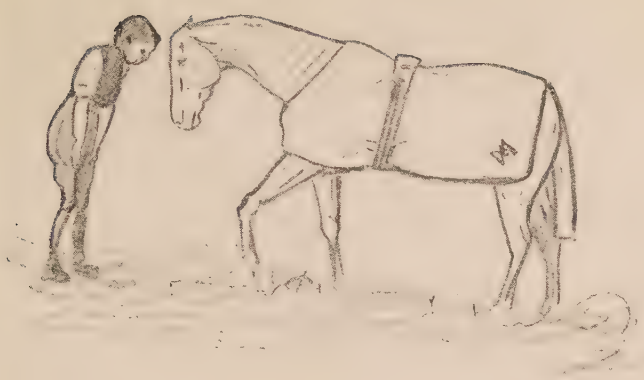
Dear old Charles Egerton, the Master, told me afterwards that everyone stood still petrified with horror and that it was one of the worst sights he'd ever seen. Such a kind, cheery fellow he was—gone, alas! like many another of my friends. When I wrote to my brother to complain about the chestnut—I hadn't then spotted the roan's defect—he replied that I evidently couldn't ride her, and that I had better send her to him to try. He took her out with the Windsor Drag, and I was pleased to hear he fared

worse than I, for when she saw hounds running she bolted the other way and took him for a frightful ride for some miles. Nothing could have been more galling to a young man with the reputation of being a good man on a horse than to be bolted with *away* from hounds. I imagine he was so sick with her that he never even had her rubbed down, and just boxed her back to me, caked in mud.

John was very penitent and sent us a nice brown mare for a few pounds more, and didn't want the chestnut back! She dragged out her days in harness and took me to the meets the following season when I was at Rugby, eventually going to South Africa during the Boer War.

Lavender, the brown mare, was one of the nicest horses ever known, very well bred, and as hard as nails. If ever there were a long journey to be done, it was Lavender who did it, and she would work straight off grass. Unfortunately for us, a careless groom broke her knees for her. It has been said that people are too apt to be down on a groom for this, and that if one did it oneself one would call it merely an unfortunate accident, while if the groom does it "he threw her down." I am bound to say that I have never known a horse's knees broken when hacking or driving except by an ignorant or careless person. In this case the groom was rattling the mare home full tilt and suddenly pulled her round a corner to go home another way without ever easing up or giving her

warning. Naturally enough, she crossed her legs and fell. Another case I recall was that of our governess, who drove a pony fast down a stony hill with a loose rein, with disastrous results. Lavender lived to do years of useful work in spite of her knees.



CHAPTER VIII

MORE OF ONE'S HUNTERS

No one would believe what horses can do straight off grass if it's really necessary. This we discovered one Ascot when motor-cars first came in and electric broughams were all the fashion. Three of our house-party were to bring their electric cars, and it was only at the last moment that it was found to be impossible to charge them except in London. And we were nine miles from Ascot and not a horse to be hired anywhere.

We had one pair of carriage horses, and hastily got up a couple of hunters from grass, starved them some twelve hours, and then fed them carefully, and in two days they were ready to do their eighteen miles a day four days that week and were none the worse. The pair took the bus, and the hunters the victoria, and we had a car as well, so we could just manage.

What a luxurious age this is by contrast! When I was a girl three of us drove fourteen miles to a dance and back in a pony carriage. There were four dances running that week, and it was pony or stop at home. And to think of the weary miles we rode home after hunting, and the many miles to the meet! How I used to hate a certain straight stretch of road that looked so near to our home and was three bitter, windy miles long.

But we enjoyed our pleasures, more particularly the anticipation of them, more than the young people of to-day appear to. When a thing is difficult to attain it is valued far more highly.

Grey Boy was one of the hunters dragged up from his comfortable meadow to trot nine miles to Ascot and back. There was a certain horsy German baron living in Shropshire who had been with me when I bought a couple of prize-winning hackney cobs at Crewe. In an unguarded moment I said I had rather a fancy for a pair of really smart grey carriage horses and asked him to let me know if he ever heard of any. To my surprise I found, on coming in from hunting one evening, a telegram from him, saying that he had seen a likely pair and would buy them for me unless he heard to the contrary before a certain hour. It was too late for me to wire "No," and they arrived next day to our dismay—a couple of big Irish grey horses, totally unlike each other, that had been driven in a coach all summer, it was said. They were just

sound enough to prevent our returning them on that ground, as Mr. Bob Tennant, of Windsor, said when he came over to see them the next day, and we unwillingly paid the money demanded of us, after much correspondence. As they were in no sense carriage horses, we sent the plainer of the two—badly flea-bitten—to Tattersall's, where he fetched 80 guineas, and my husband kept the other for himself. When he was clipped and trimmed and hogged he made quite a good-looking hunter, and, though he took hold a bit, was not a bad sort.

In those good days, when but few people gathered for the point-to-points that were such a feature of our Berkshire country, one was accustomed to ride about at these meetings, and great fun it was. One of these was held between Bill Hill and Hurst Church, and my husband on Grey Boy was quite enjoying it all. But his horse suddenly thought he would like to be in it himself, after seeing all the horses galloping and jumping, and bolted. He was headed off from following the competitors, so made for the Wokingham Road, coming to a fence, on the other side of which—as my husband well knew—was the greenest, dirtiest pond in the country, draining the farmyard on the other side of the road. Very fortunately, Grey Boy sensed it for himself, just as he was going to jump. He stuck his toes in and stopped, and, though it was sudden, his rider stopped on in spite of the hogged mane, and remained in the saddle.

My husband never cared to sell horses to friends. "Send them to Tattersall's," he would say, "and they can buy them there if they like." And wise he was, for I have known and suffered shady things from purchasers.

Grey Boy's turn came, and he was bought at Tattersall's by a neighbour, one of the Allfreys, for a good price. But he met with a disastrous fate, being found hanged by the neck the day after he arrived at his new home. The groom could not have untied his head at night, and he fell when asleep and strangled himself. At least that was the theory. He had always been left loose in his box with us, poor old fellow.

When it was decided that my Irish mare A1 would be rather too much for me in a cramped country like the Garth, I offered her to a man looking for a big horse for a distant country, and he came down to try her cubbing, early one September.

We had a certain amount of jogging about in the woods, but no run, and with the ground like iron, no jumping. At nine o'clock we suggested going home, but our friend said he'd follow us in a few minutes. He came home much later, said he liked the mare, and would have her vetted next day and give me my price, and left. In the afternoon I met a neighbour, Howard Palmer, who at once said: "How's your mare after this morning?" "Why?" said I. "Well, the man on her galloped her like a lunatic after you left, and

PHILIP MARTINEAU AND THE AUTHOR AT A POINT-TO-POINT (GREY BOY AND FORERUNNER).

umped her, too. I don't suppose she'll have a leg o stand on to-morrow."

And lo! when the vet came there was A1, who'd never been sick or sorry in all the seasons I'd ridden her, with a big leg on her, a badly strained tendon.

There was no redress, just a case of "Never try to get your own back; someone else is sure to do it for you and much better."

To make matters worse, our so-called friend went about in his country, near to my brother, saying I had tried to stick him with an unsound horse, which, of course, came to my ears.

The mare got all right in a few weeks, and was sold at Tattersall's for quite a fair price to some M.F.H., with whom she was doing well, I heard, a couple of seasons later.

I was then left with my beautiful Ladybird, my Quorn horse Forerunner, and a bay mare called Flying Duchess, who was good enough, though a bit sticky at her fences. She was also quite the most unpleasant "ride" home from hunting I ever knew, the kind that runs away at a walk. After a long day one wanted to jog along quietly and not prance. If I let her trot she cantered, and then wanted to gallop.

My brother-in-law, Maitland, now Lauderdale, eventually took her off my hands to school Yeomen on! I hope they liked her.

We put her into the ladies' race at the Garth point-to-point held at Arborfield; though she had no

chance of winning, but as I was entering my good horse Forerunner it was just as easy to train two as one, not that they were either of them what one could call "trained," but they did some gallops in our water meadows at Hurst. The Duchess came down as she landed over the brook and was too lazy to move. As she lay there another horse jumped on her, literally taking off from her ribs! That made her get up, and she finished the course none the worse.

Forerunner came in third, though had he been pressed he might have done better. His rider, knowing he was only half fit, very wisely did not attempt to shake him up. He was a chestnut from the Quorn, who came up to Tattersall's with a lot of others, and I had a hint given me to buy him if possible as he was what you might call a "perfect hunter." I think he was really the first I had ever owned who answered to that description, for his manners, paces, and performances really were perfect. He was a little on the small side for me, and, in spite of his perfections, he never appealed to me as did some of my rougher and tougher experiments.

Still, I often wished I could have had him when I was hunting in countries where I could have proved his worth! The last hunter I ever bought was Lady Vic, a big bay mare, that I got from a man who was leaving the Staff College. I really didn't need her but he was so anxious to get her a good home that he begged me to take her for £50. I think she suited

ıe better than any horse I ever owned. Possibly as ne got older and steadier oneself one appreciated ood manners more highly! She perhaps was not as rilliant as Forerunner, but she was bigger, with a ood shoulder and lots in front, and I always liked to eel there was plenty in hand. She could crawl in nd out of a tricky place (of which there were plenty ı the Garth country) in unequalled fashion, and allop, too.

I like to think that the last place I ever put a horse t was one that the rest of the field had turned away rom. Lady Vic scrambled down a bank, took off rom stiff mud, and jumped a nasty looking ditch vith a fence and some trifles of timber thrown in. And we rode home, leaving hounds for ever. I had nade up my mind before I went out that day that it hould be the last time; and I am glad that I kept my ierve till the last minute.

It must be terrible to have to make believe to your- elf that there's a nearer way to hounds than by jump- ng the big hedge in front of you, or to pretend there's vire in a fence you're really afraid of, and the hun- ired and one excuses that are made for keeping to he road.

Terrible to dread going out, and to dread even more o confess to yourself that your nerve has gone, and o seize on any excuse of weather to stay at home. One does not blame those who, middle-aged, possibly tout, like to see what fun they can from the road,

though it is very riling sometimes when one has been riding strictly to hounds to find the macadam division have cut in just in front of you. (And this so often happens in a country that has almost as many roads as fields.) In the Shires you can't stick so much to the roads. You have to go on or drop out. A woman who has been very keen begins to go home early, does not stop to draw the last covert, goes home a little earlier each day. "Losing her nerve," they laugh. "Not so keen as she was." "*Getting old.*" This last is the worst of all, and many there are who would give up if they only dared!

If my husband could have gone on hunting with me, it would have been quite different, but after some years he became so increasingly busy that he was never able to get a day's hunting, and it was lonely work. Possibly had I lived the rest of my life in such a sporting place as Ireland I should have been hunting yet, as indeed some of my contemporaries are.

CHAPTER IX

HUNTING AT PAU—HUNTING IN AMERICA

One winter I was asked by Charles Crichton, that most popular of men, to go over to Mullaboden for six weeks to hunt, but I was already booked to go to Pau, to my deep regret, and couldn't get out of it. I can't say I enjoyed the hunting at Pau. The distances were great, and you were advised never to ask your way of a peasant, as they took a delight in misdirecting you. Horses were hired out by a man called Larrigain, who bought them in Ireland, and must have been of Irish origin by his name. The country was terribly rough, no turf, only a sort of ling, beneath which were occasional holes, and the fences were really banks with a crop of young trees growing on them. These were cut every three years for

firewood and your horse had to drive his way through them. One poor girl who lived near us in Berkshire had her foot almost torn off at one of these fences, having got it wedged in some way just before her horse jumped off the bank.

I must say that the courage of the Frenchmen impressed me greatly. They knew very little about hunting, but were quite fearless, and only lived for jumping, Charles de la Rochefoucauld being one of the most rash riders I ever saw. There was a hard frost while I was there, so they got up a paperchase, and M. le Marquis broke his collarbone and two ribs at this game.

The frost went as suddenly as it came, and, behold, he was out hunting, strapped into a sort of iron contraption, and went just as hard as ever! They always had a bagged fox, but they worked it so cleverly that one hardly realised it. They would get one from the mountains the night before and let him out in a small wood, and then put a couple of terriers on to him so as to bustle him gently along. When well on the move the hounds were laid on, and, as the fox knew his way home, a good run generally followed.

On my first day I was terribly discomfited by being presented with the brush, although I was quite the last to arrive when they broke up the fox. Everyone was anxiously awaiting my arrival, it seemed, not because I was the stranger to be honoured, but because none of them wanted to give the customary

FRANCIS DARINFIELD ASTLEY AND HIS HOUNDS, BY BEN MARSHALL.

douceur to the huntsman. They had all been honoured in turn with the brush, and were most anxious that the stranger should relieve their pockets when one came!

My horse was not much to look at, and I had grave doubts as to whether I'd mount even, for he stood over in front and trembled at the knees. But as I was assured he was all right, I started, and Larrigain piloted me. When I saw the sort of places that he climbed up or slid down, and thought of my shaky steed, I was full of fear. But he kept yelling to me to come on, that the horse was his, and he knew what he could do, and that "We must catch ze dogs." So we swam rivers and forded torrents and climbed banks, and I almost think trees, and I never enjoyed a hunt less, except in America. It was like a drag, as everyone was numbered as they came up. It wasn't the last of my day either, for at the end a little girl, whose father had brought me in his car to the meet, came up and asked what she should do as she had lost father. I couldn't go ten miles in the opposite direction to where her father's car had been sent, as my man and brougham were waiting for me in quite another place, so I said she'd better come with me, and I'd telegraph, which I did. I couldn't see a child of ten left to find her way alone in this wild country, and thought I acted for the best, gave her tea, and saw to her generally and took her home. But her people were furious with me. I wonder what

they thought I ought to have done, and what I really ought to have done—left her alone, I suppose! Her father should never have let her leave him. I suppose he got lost, and she was full of go and went on.

The de la Rochefoucaulds asked me to dine. They were connected with Scotland by marriage, and as my husband knew M. le Marquis well, I accepted. It was at the time when England was extremely unpopular with France, and I was made to feel most uncomfortable. All through dinner my country was jeered at, and after dinner they played games, pretending to be Salvation Army lassies, etc. One game was a circus, and they were determined I should be the lion. I was equally determined not to be the lion, and glad I was when I saw the performance. The trainer with a long whip urged the lion round and round the room, and finished by standing triumphantly with one foot on the prostrate lion, cracking his whip and shouting triumphantly that he had killed "the lion."

As my carriage was only ordered for a certain hour I had to stay and put up with it, but if it hadn't happened to me personally I would never have believed that people's feelings could have so far led them away as to insult a guest.

The following year we went to America in the autumn for a trip, and while staying with friends at Lenox it was suggested I should have a day's hunting. As I would as soon have thought of leaving my tooth-

brush behind as my habit and boots, I was delighted; but when I saw my mount, kindly lent me by a girl who, owing to deep mourning, had not ridden for some time, I had an unpleasant shock. A big bay horse with a coat like a fur rug and the appearance of a very determined bear met my eye.

Thinking this might be the usual way a hunter was turned out in Massachusetts, I said nothing and mounted. We made our way through an orchard country, where the gathered apples were lying in scarlet heaps on the ground to sweat before being packed in barrels. The fruit-trees had lost their leaves, but the country was aflame with maple and beech and the crisp, cool air as invigorating as champagne is said to be. Anyhow, the name sounds light and bubbling!

The hounds had just been procured from England, and this was their first hunt. Hunt it was not, for they ran a drag. The master went in front of them, hurrooshing and making weird sounds like "Yakko, yakko!" The line had been laid over country fenced with snake fences, and to those who have never jumped a snake fence I would counsel total abstinence. They are criss-crossed and interwoven of split wood, strengthened with barbed wire at the top instead of a rail. The wire had been removed where the line was laid, just enough room being given for a couple of horses to jump the fence, and for anyone who was short-sighted about the most dangerous thing

possible, or, indeed, for anyone unless on a very temperate horse, which mine was not. Directly we began to gallop he got the bit between his teeth and set off madly. I couldn't check him at his fences, which he rushed, and it was all I could do to keep him straight and away from the wire. About a dozen fences were jumped in this desperate gallop, and then I felt him begin to fail. He wouldn't be checked, however, and at a fence and a bank he fell from sheer exhaustion and lack of wind. I felt it coming and got my foot out of the stirrup, and, as he came down, sprang as well as I could from the saddle on the off side and rolled rapidly away. Just as well, too, for the beauty turned over just where I should have been had I not rolled out of his way so nimbly.

It transpired afterwards that the horse had not been ridden for months—fourteen, they said. It was a monstrous thing to have put anyone at all on him for a hunt. He ran away again shortly after with someone, after which his owner's father had him shot. "Quite a good idea, I should say," drawled a Virginian who knew the horse.

Many of the men out that day had never seen a hunt; some had never even jumped a fence, but they were all as plucky as could be, and, indeed, some nerve was needed.

My Virginian friend was very indignant at my being put on such a horse, and begged me to let him find me a mount the next time. I didn't fare much

better, however, when he produced what he proudly said was the best jumper in the country, Hailstone by name, and a beautiful grey horse he was, and certainly a fine performer, for he had jumped 6 feet 3 inches at the Horse Show in New York; I'm not sure it wasn't more than that even. His habit was to canter quietly up to a fence, stop dead, and then hurl himself over in a kind of buck, with 3 feet to spare each time. It was the most exhausting thing I have ever known. The end came swiftly, for we jumped a fence under a tree, a jump which was a perfectly safe and possible one for any ordinary horse; but he made such a spring that the branch knocked me clean out of the saddle. I leaned back as far as I could, but it caught me about the waist, so high did he jump. I was none the worse, and mounted and went on, but was too breathless to do any more show jumping in the second line and said I'd go home. Hailstone was much annoyed at being turned away from hounds, and reared, and nothing I could do would induce him to stay on four legs. At last a man who evidently was on terms of friendship with him said to him sharply: "Get down, Hailstone; get down."

Hailstone got down promptly and behaved all right afterwards, but I didn't get over my cup-and-ball game for a long time. The Americans, who had heard so much of English riders, were, in their secret hearts, not sorry to hear I had come down twice.

Our Virginian was managing the stud belonging to Mr. Sturgess, and asked us over to see it. He was a remarkable-looking man himself, appearing to be very fat, but in reality all muscle, and one of his favourite tricks was to set ten barrels in a row and jump in and out of each barrel till he reached the end of the row without touching one of them with his hands. He was a champion horseback wrestler, too, and showed us a photograph taken while he pulled a man and his horse over backwards. Mr. Sturgess was making all kinds of breeding experiments and crossing various races of horses. He owned a celebrated trotter, Ben Hur by name, coal-black and very handsome. He was quite an old horse, the sire of many a winner, but was curiously tame, and let us go into his box and play with him. "Kiss me, Ben Hur," said his groom, and the old horse bent his handsome head and nuzzled away with his lips at the man's cheek.

The thing that impressed me more in America than anything else was the way the horses were treated there. Their grooms spoke to them as if they were human beings; there was no shouting, no rough "Get over" or "Gerrup," but a complete understanding between horse and man, and much friendship, even affection. It was the same with every horse on the stud-farm: all were gentle and kindly, even when spirited.

We bought one of them, a stallion called Draco, who won my affection by coming up and nuzzling

DRACO.

me with his lips whenever he could. We bought at the same time a smart buggy, and had them both shipped. The horse cost £5 to bring over, but the buggy £20, and to this day I can't see why. They said it had to do with cubic measurement, but when you consider the horse had to be fed and groomed and that he took up more space in his stall than the buggy did when packed in a case with the wheels off, it is difficult to understand.

But the sad thing was that two or three months of rough handling—or perhaps I should say rough speaking—on the part of English grooms completely changed Draco, who lost his charming ways and became quite difficult, going so far as to attempt to climb a lamp-post one day when I was driving him in Reading.

Horses are much more sensitive to the voice than one imagines. I was once taken through a stable full of Irish horses at a cavalry depôt in Roumania just after the war. There was one stable for Russian horses, one for Hungarians, and so on—all horses that came to them after the war when there was a general division of material among the Allies.

We walked down the first stable between two lines of Irish horses, talking English as we went. Every horse turned his head and watched us on hearing their old language. I'm sure that it aroused some latent memory in them, for in none of the other stables did the horses do the same thing.

There were plenty of good horses in that country, but most of them had come from Hungary or from England, the native-bred horses of any value having been stolen by the Germans. I was much impressed, though, by the fine horsemanship of the daughters of Prince Stirbey. They did not seem to mind what they rode, and were superb horsewomen.

Chile produces good horses and good riders. The native pony is a well-bred and smart little animal, and Chileans put their children to ride their horses as early as three years old! You might almost say a Chilean is born on a horse; everyone, however poor, owns one, and all transport among the poor is done by pack-horse. You may even see a chest of drawers or a bed strapped on to one of these ponies climbing up the hilly streets.

They hunt foxes in Chile, and they have very good fun with their paperchases, while a great deal of polo is played and some good ponies bred, as well as race-horses.

All the way up the western coast of South America the native-bred ponies were of a good stamp—a relic of Spanish days, perhaps—even at Panama.

If a good horse gets into a country his stamp will be left for many generations. This is the reason that there are so many dun horses with a black streak down the back in Shropshire, which colour can be traced back to a sire imported from Barbary, they say, hundreds of years ago.

And how many horses does one not see in Yorkshire with the black patch of "Wales" on the quarter, this being a very fine horse of Lord Middleton's.

CHAPTER X

HARNESS HORSES—COACHING

THE first harness horse we ever bought was lovely Bacton Molly, she who would go up to her bit as gallantly after a twelve-mile trot as when she started, and was never sick nor sorry. We owed her to the good offices of that kindly and gifted vet., Mr. Williams, dead many long years ago. Whether he'd seen her at Tattersall's or elsewhere I forget, but he said we ought not to lose a chance of getting her, as she was good enough for the royal stable. She was a hackney, bred in Norfolk, and I learned that there was a son of hers down in the country she came from. Off I went to Norfolk, where I was shown one unsuitable animal after another, and it was only on threatening to leave by the next train that at last the animal I came to look at was produced, and a fine

fellow he surely was. No, he'd never been in harness exactly, but they thought he'd go quiet enough in a cart. So a big cart was soon fastened to him, and, though it was a noisy, rattling thing, the horse didn't seem to mind, and I bought him and sent him to London. Next day I put him to a phaeton with his mother and drove him round and round Belgrave Square, and he went admirably. A dealer friend of mine gave me a bit of advice. Said he : "That young horse of yours is only three, not four, and you should turn him out for a year and not drive him." Alas! I was much too proud of my beautiful pair of horses to listen to him, with the result that in a few months' time his fetlocks began to swell a bit. My husband occasionally used to come round the stables and say : "Some of these horses must be sold; there are far too many." And then it was always a terrible question which was to go. This time it was Molly's son, as I had a brilliant pair of cobs coming along. The man who got him did as I ought to have done and sent him to grass, from which he came up so much improved that his new owner showed him at the Hackney Show, and he took first for single harness horses. His name was Napoleon, and he was afterwards sold for £500. A fine black-brown, 16 hands.

I collected my pair of cobs in rather a curious way. Hunting one day in Northamptonshire, I noticed a farmer out on a rough 15-hand pony with very remarkable action. I took his name and address, sent

a vet. round, and bought the pony for £40. She was Silvertop in the *Hackney Stud Book* and a real beauty when clipped and cleaned. It did not seem possible to match her, but, going to Bridgenorth to stay with friends, it was suggested I should go over to Crewe to a big sale and see if I could find anything. An escort was forthcoming, and off we went. We hunted through the stables filled with three or four hundred horses, with no success at all, and I gave it up in despair. "Come and look at the auction." And we went. As we sat high up on the benches, presently there came into the ring the very match of Silvertop. No time for reflection. My mind was instantly made up. "Go and buy her," I said to the escort. He knew what price I would go to, and came back radiant to tell me he'd bid £65 and had got her. Down we clambered, and found that Gordon Fairy (*H.S.B.*) was a perfect picture. I was offered £10 more for her, which pleased me, but I did not take it. Presently I found myself being persuaded to buy another of quite a different stamp. This was Mel Valley Modjeska, by Chocolate Junior, black-brown, and a real beauty with perfect shoulder. She had taken 120 firsts in saddle and harness and had never been beaten. Her saddle prizes were for horses up to 15 stone and not over 15 hands.

When I got back to Bridgenorth my husband, comfortably tired after shooting, said: "Well, did you get a match for Silvertop?" I had to break

t very gently that I had bought two! I draw a veil on what followed, but had my reward when we got home, for when Gordon Fairy and Silvertop were paraded before him he could not tell which was which. I could, though, because one was in show condition and the other merely hard.

Gordon Fairy could certainly pull above a bit. One day, driving the pair of them home from Windsor, I told my man to get down and alter the couplings. I ought to have done it myself, for I never met a coachman yet who knew how to couple. Anyhow, he altered them the wrong way, so that Gordon Fairy was pulling the waggonette with her head, and she actually injured her jaw. When Mr. Bob Tennant came over to look at it—it soon got right—I happened to ask him if he knew anyone wanting a hunter, as we had one for sale. His answer was: "You'll never get your price in Berkshire. Here they want a hunter that will mind the baby, wait at table, and tune the piano when he isn't busy; and all for thirty pounds!"

My coachman never seemed able to get a horse into show condition, which is really an art in itself, so that when Silvertop and Gordon Fairy were sold at Tattersall's I did not get nearly their value, though I made quite a bit over them. The man who bought them took them over to the Continent, got them into first-class show condition, and swept the board with them at Brussels, Antwerp, and Paris, where they were sold for £600.

The late Charles Pelham Clinton, who so often judged the harness classes, once said of me to my sister, Lady Lauderdale: "Your sister can buy a horse, even in the rough, with anyone, but she can never show them up to form." This was quite true, for I had to depend on my groom to get them fit, whereas I bought on my own initiative.

Modjeska was our very best buy. Sweet tempered and with lovely action from the shoulder, she was a most comfortable hack, and I never tired when riding her to covert.

After owning a good many hackneys—though never of the knee action variety—I can only say that they are the most reliable and tractable of any horses, never showing any temper. Modjeska made a perfect hack for my husband, who never regretted the purchase. He came home early one Saturday afternoon, and we went for a ride, he on Modjeska; fell in with the hounds, and had quite a good run. To our great surprise, this show hackney jumped everything with the greatest ease, though her rider weighed 14 stone and was 6 feet $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Eventually one of the boys was allowed to hunt her, and if he fell off she always waited for him to mount. One day I thought I'd take her round the park in a show buggy by way of practice. We came to a ditch I had forgotten, which was overgrown with grass, mercifully a shallow one. The mare jumped it, and I, seeing what was coming, rose in my stirrups meta-

MR. BERTRAM MILLS DRIVING EDGWARE DUCHESS.

phorically with the jump, and came down again "in the saddle," with my feet pressed hard against the driving-board! Some jump!

I showed her at Ranelagh, when that fine whip Mr. Bertram Mills was kind enough to drive her; but she had lost that dash and go that is so necessary to the show-ring and which is the outcome of constant practice, very high condition, and light work only.

Modgie, her pet name, was with us many years and gave us two foals. Her end was tragic, but we hope swift. She was found one morning stone dead in the field where she was turned out at nights. The vet. said he could not discover any cause for death, but a pony had been seen to kick at her the day before—I was away, or she would not have remained with the pony after this—and we only could surmise she had been kicked either over the heart or on the head, though there was no sign of a blow.

Sir Walter Gilbey had early made me a member of the Hackney Society; in fact, I was one of the first lady members. He was a dear old man, and so knowledgeable about many things; very keen on correct carriage building, and he taught me quite a lot about it. I profited by his hints and had a couple of smart carriages built, and later drew a design for a flush-sided car, the first to be seen in London, built from my design by Messrs Brainsby on a Hotchkiss chassis.

He wrote several booklets about ponies and cows and many things, and got me to give him the notes I

had taken in America on dairying, which he interpo lated into one of them. I had written up the subject for the *Daily Mail*, but they wouldn't print my article, as they said the facts were unbelievable! In a very few years England was doing as well, or better, herself, with her milking averages, and I was justified.

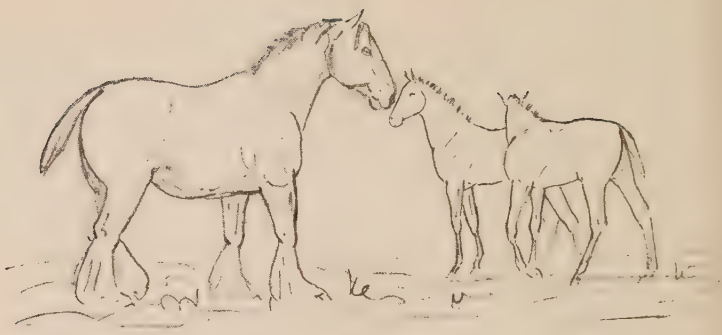
Coaching used to be great fun at Brighton when I was a girl. Colonel Pryce-Hamilton (a connection of my father's), Colonel Ward Bennett of the 5th Lancers, and Mr. "Jarge" Paulet all drove coaches. They had a great game of "follow my leader," in which they had to follow the first coach or lose. Once Jarge got them well beaten by going down a narrow lane to where he knew there was a little square which would just let him turn his horses round in the confined space; the other two were forced to wait outside till he came out, as there was only room for one coach in the little cul-de-sac, and it was wonderful that he could turn at all.

Another time the leader for the afternoon took us into a ploughed field, wet and sticky, and that, again, was no joke to get out of. Jarge Paulet was a great character and one of the best whips of the day—amateur, of course. He delighted in being taken for a real coachman. The first time I went, as a girl, to Ascot, he was introduced to me as "Jarge, our coachman," and he certainly looked the part with his bird's-eye necktie or scarf, his queer hat, and yellow waistcoat. I couldn't understand why the coachman

shook hands, and asked in a whisper why he was with us and not with his horses. Amid shouts of joy it was repeated to Jarge, who was frightfully pleased and complimented. He gave me a few lessons in driving a team, but I found the reins very heavy, though the actual driving seemed to me easier than tandem, which I had tried once or twice.

It was always a great pleasure to drive a pair of really good horses, one that never comes one's way nowadays. Motoring seems to me tame in comparison. There is such a sense of companionship with one's horses, such an answering note, as well as their own individuality, while, however responsive a car is, it can but reflect the feeling of its driver.

Probably the only place left to drive in is America, where the parks of each city are so vast, with roads kept exclusively for horse traffic. Bucarest was one of the last European towns where one could see fine carriage horses, and where even the carriages plying for hire in the streets were quite smart pair-horse victorias with high-stepping horses and coachmen in long velvet tunics and scarlet sashes, like Russian coachmen. Here people would keep a motor-car for long drives, but use their horses for ceremonial visits and for driving in their *chaussée*—like our park—in the evening. The roads were so bad in the country after the war that it was difficult to get about even with motors.



CHAPTER XI

HORSE-BREEDING AND SELLING—HOW THE FRENCH MAKE IT PAY

This is the story of doleful failures, and is only included to point a moral to the amateur, which moral is, to stick to one breed only, and, if possible, breed only bloodstock (I don't include Shires). Having seen the amazing success of my father in breeding hunters, I did not see why I could not do it too. But I never took into account the fact that he bred on limestone, whereas we lived on a poor, wet soil, a gravel that was constantly flooded and which did not produce the necessary good grass. Then, again, I had no really experienced man to attend the mares, and lost four.

My first essay was with a pretty Irish roan mare who was often lame, and I thought a year's turn-out would cure her. I sent her and another to a neigh-

bouring stud for the winter, and, on hearing no news, wrote to the owner, and got an answer back: "Thought I had let you know the roan mare died in the winter, and the other was not in foal." That put me off for a bit, but in an evil hour we thought we should like to have a foal from Bacton Molly, a particularly fine hackney carriage mare whom we adored. So she went to stay a bit at Sir Walter Gilbey's and came back in foal to one of his best. We went to America, and I got back at Christmas, to find Molly had been shamefully neglected. She had gone to skin and bone, with a staring coat (probably left out without food). We did our best for her, but she never regained her strength, and when her foal was born she died, deeply regretted.

The next tragedy was my good mare Ladybird, who had first broken her pastern, and then, when in foal to a good horse, broke her leg in the stifle when turned out. *She* had to be destroyed.

The final tragedy was my last hunter, Lady Vic. I was very fond of her, and when I gave up hunting did not want to part with her, so we settled to breed from her. She was a big, good-looking bay, about seven years old. Apparently all went well, and she was supposed to be safe for another week. I wanted to show my American horse, Draco, at Olympia, and took him up with the head man. We were only away a couple of nights, returning to find Lady Vic had got her foal, but was in high fever. My man said she

had not had her gruel at once, but I can't believe it was that. Mr. Wheatley, the vet. from Reading, did his best, but the poor mare died. I sat with her day and night and was dreadfully grieved. I fear I lost my temper and told poor Wheatley it would be much cheaper for me to let the horses die without sending for him, as he never seemed able to save their lives. The foal lived and was adopted by Nina, the big white Shire mare, who had her foal—by Draco—quite comfortably in the field a day or two before Lady Vic died. She brought them both up admirably and did not seem at all overtaxed.

These were not only personal sorrows, in the cases of the mares that died, but pecuniary losses, for up to that time my horse-book was a great satisfaction to me. During some twelve or thirteen years I had kept an accurate account of all the horses we bought and the prices obtained when sold. We'd had quite a number, what with harness horses, hunters, ponies, etc., and, averaging one with another, the account just balanced. I had neither lost nor gained money, and we had all our service and hunting for nothing except stable expenses.

We had two nice foals from my husband's hack Modjeska, but they were disappointing. The first was by Chibiabos, and we called her Chicane—quite a suitable name, for instead of the "big bay horse" we got a "little chestnut filly." The other was a black, high-couraged horse of 15 hands, but with an ugly

PHILIP MARTINEAU ON MODJESKA.

pink blaze down to his mouth, the exact counterpart of a pony accidentally bred. That is to say, we bought the mother off a gipsy, and, to our great surprise, found the foal one morning in the field some six months later. Anyhow, Modjeska's foal had exactly the same ugly mark. Sir Walter Gilbey always said that the eye had a good deal to do with the shape and colour of the progeny, and proceeded to prove his statements. Mr. Bethell, who was then breeding bloodstock, told me also that he could guarantee that a foal should be of any particular colour. He also gave very good reasons on the same line as Sir Walter's.

Lavender was supposed to be in foal by Draco, but time went on and there was no sign of such a thing, and a farmer neighbour persuaded me to let him have her, when she promptly produced a foal. This foal won many prizes later on in the classes for young stock "calculated to make a hunter," which, as the judges had refused to allow Draco to compete for any prizes as a sire, said a good deal more for my judgment than for theirs.

Chicane brought us £80 at Tattersall's to make a polo pony. What queer tricks memory plays! She had cut her fetlock badly when a young filly with a bit of broken glass, and, though it quickly healed, she wore a bandage for some time.

When she was broken we put bandages on her and tried her in the field with stick and ball. But she

started limping, though there was nothing wrong with her. This happened several times; directly the bandage was put on she went lame, and we at last connected it with the memory of that old hurt. She looked clean thoroughbred, and I was able to chaff Colonel McLean thoroughly one day. He was a neighbour and did a good deal of judging at shows. He disliked hackneys extremely, and never had a good word for them. One day I asked him to have a look at a liver-chestnut pony I had. He came when I was out, and, next time I met him, said, in answer to my inquiry as to what he thought of the pony: "Oh, it's well enough, but you should never have let me see it in the same stable as that chestnut thoroughbred of yours. It wasn't fair." I rubbed it in well that the chestnut was out of a hackney mare.

The best way to find out if your young horses are any good is to sell them. But we were singularly unfortunate over this. My last lot went to Tattersall's all sound, and my husband was to call in on Monday as soon as he got to town to see about their reserves. When he came back my first words were: "What did the horses fetch?" He looked at me aghast and said: "My dear, I forgot all about it." Of course, they went for nothing. Being untried, I could not warrant them as hunters.

Out of the many we owned, only three times did we sell privately. One was Budbrook, with whom Hughie Harrison was delighted; one was the gipsy's

pony Nellie, a pretty pony if ever there was one. We had cured her of her flighty ways, and my boy of seven rode her. One day Colonel McLean saw them out, and told a mutual friend, P., that he'd seen a topping pony that would suit his boy, and P. wrote and asked if I would sell the pony, and what I wanted. I answered that I hadn't thought of selling, but if he wanted the pony he could have it for £25, as we had another coming on. He took it, and I told him particularly to give the pony no corn, as we never gave her any.

In a short time I got a furious letter, saying I'd sold him a dangerous pony and I must take it back. It seems his man had fed Nellie upon corn, and probably given her no work, and then taken the boy to a meet, when at sight of pink coats and hounds she had reared and became unmanageable. As I considered this was his own fault I refused to take her back.

The last time I sold privately was also a boy's pony. I had met a Mr. Seely from Northamptonshire at Lady Jane Taylor's, and he had asked if anyone could recommend a boy's hunter. I said I had one, whereupon dear old Lady Jane covered me with blushes, ending up by saying I had bought all her horses for the last eighteen years, "and only two at that," she said. "I used one for ten years, and I've had the other eight, and he's still going strong." Mr. Seely eventually wrote to me about the pony Punch, and I told him all I knew, including the fact that if you put

him in harness he'd kick any trap to pieces, or get rid of it somehow. Once I put him in the milk cart, and he jumped into the air, landing on all fours, breaking the shafts, and spilling all the milk. At another attempt he ran backwards and smashed up a perfectly good pony cart against a wall!

But a perfect hunter for a boy was Punch. Mr. Seely bought him, and afterwards wrote me a most charming letter, saying that it was the only horse he'd ever bought that really answered the owner's description, thanking me warmly for having sent him such a treasure!

One other tiresome thing happened in selling. We had a sale of farm stock and included a young mare out of the shire mare Nina, by Draco. A fast, good-looking mare, who'd have been a splendid single brougham horse in the old days. She was as active and nimble as could be, and was used chiefly in mowing the cricket field and lawns, when she would stand alone and let the man rake the cut grass up into heaps as quiet as a sheep. She fetched £50 at the sale. Next morning at breakfast we saw the mare being led back, and a letter came with her, saying she was quite unmanageable and dangerous, and the neighbour, P. again, who had bought her at the sale, refused to keep her.

It transpired that the bailiff had put a small-sized bridle on her and had driven her home in it, evidently hurting her very much, and the next day, when they

tried to harness her, she refused absolutely to have a bridle put on. Poor thing, how else could she show the idiots that it hurt her? She was mad with terror at the sight of the bridle when they brought her back. I couldn't prove that she'd been maltreated, and, indeed, I was only too glad to get her out of their rough hands as we were very fond of her. A cousin happened to come over the next day, to whom we told the whole story. He had the mare out, was so pleased with her that he insisted on giving us £10 more than P. had paid, and sent her to town, where she was one of his best workers for many years.

Draco, my American horse, was not a success in England. Everyone was prejudiced in favour of using thoroughbred stock only, and the result, as seen in the use of these racehorses on the farmer's nag or milk-cart mare, a poor, weedy type usually, resulted in equally weedy foals, with little bone and no substance, the type being too far apart. Draco had splendid bone, and was out of a Kentucky blue grass mare, a trotter, by a hackney, and went back on both sides to good English stock. We thought that if he were crossed with some of these poor milk-cart mares a good type of saddle or light harness horse would result. But everyone's hand was against him because he was not in the book. I sent him to Olympia, where there was just one class in which he could be entered, and in which he had not the remotest chance of winning, but he would at any rate be seen. Mr.

Walter Winans, of trotting horse fame, was greatly struck with him, and could be found at all hours in his box, showing him to various friends. He was quite fast, and I used to drive him to Twyford Station, round many corners, and avoiding old people and children, in four and a half minutes, a mile and a half away.

We had great fun sleighing with him, and one 28th of April, when there was a terrible blizzard and snowstorm, I drove Draco in my sleigh all round the village and through the park where the heads of the daffodils were just above the snow. This was at the time of the Brigade Meeting at Hawthorn Hill—a day so cold as to be remembered. Draco was sold to Germany, as no one wanted him in England. It was surely ironical that his progeny should later on be awarded prizes by the same judges who laughed him to scorn.

When people reproached me for wasting money on breeding horses, my answer was that I neither raced nor played cards, and I liked to spend my money this way. After all, it cost me nothing much but the loss of my mares—two of whom were not worth much.

Breeding may be all very well if one has safe paddocks and a properly managed stud farm. But even the small Irish farmer can make a good bit by breeding a youngster every year from his one mare, for his field is practically a paddock with the high banks around it, and the mare lives with the family, as you may say, and the colt or filly is educated by her

master round the little farm, he holding the halter while he teaches it to follow him, first over a little ditch, and then a bit of a bank, until quite big jumps are made nothing of.

Possibly the hackney blood is too far from the thoroughbred to make a good cross. I found that instead of getting the good points of each, one was apt to get the reverse, and, moreover, to get the head and top of the one and the tail and quarters of the other; anyhow, the only one of mine that was a good looker was the chestnut filly out of Modjeska by a thoroughbred, but then the mother's shape was so good that one cannot look on that as conclusive. At any rate none of the well-bred mares I sent to Sir Charles Bronlow's hackneys produced anything worth looking at bred the reverse way.

The French Government has been breeding for some years on a very intelligent plan. Instead of only subsidising thoroughbred horses (Premium sires), which are available to the farmer at low fees in England, the French Ministry of Agriculture have an immense stud farm in Normandy, where six breeds of horses live. Here can be found whichever type of horse pays the farmer best to breed. And how many make it pay in England? But they do in the North of France where horse-breeding is on a very large scale among the farmers, and they make a good deal of money by it. Not only do they breed farm horses, but saddle horses, gun horses (light and

heavy), racehorses, trotting horses for the race-track, and fast trotting cobs for their own driving.

And the buyers from America, Japan, and European countries are certain that on their visits to the various fairs of Normandy they will find plenty of horses to choose from, according to their requirements.

Should anyone wish to see the great stud farm which makes all this possible in France, let him go one September or October to the small village in Normandy called Le Pin au Haras, where he will find an inn (the Hôtel du Tourne Bride) in the wood, famous for its cooking, its crayfish, and its "Calvados" or apple brandy of great age, which inn is at the gates of the stud farm.

This great stud farm, known as the Haras des Pins, is maintained by the Ministry of Agriculture (France) in order that the French farmer may be helped to breed the most saleable types of horses, and it is open to visitors in the afternoon.

Charmingly situated in the woods of Normandy, where long grass rides converge on a courtyard of well-kept turf and gravel drives, is the Louis XIV. château (now used as quarters), with low buildings of mellowed brick on each side.

These are the stables, filled with stallions who are home again for some months from the districts to which they had been allotted.

First are shown long lines of "Le Cob Normand."

stout little horses, some 15 hands high, and used for breeding light artillery and general farm horses. Stabled according to colour, they make a fine show, from dark brown and liver-chestnut to roan and grey.

Across the courtyard are the trotting horses. Trotting races are very popular in France. Many trotters are also bought by America and Germany from these districts, and some of the sires shown have won large sums of money in their day, notably the veteran Beaumanoir, a black horse, twenty-five years old at the time of my visit. Two of his sons stand near him, and have each succeeded in lowering records.

Sires for saddle horses are next seen, both heavy and light, whose progeny are usually bought by Dragoon and Cuirassier regiments in France, and also by Japan—a well-bred looking lot, formerly known as Cock-tails in England, with a couple of thoroughbreds among them.

(Twenty-eight thoroughbreds are at a farm a short distance away for breeding racing stock.)

Last of all the horses shown were the Percherons, the "*clou*" of the entertainment; for Normandy is the home of this popular horse.

It was a great sight. Stable after stable of grey or white horses, enormous, but most active animals, who trot at an amazing pace. Many weigh 800 kilos (1,750 lbs), and are 18 hands high, though not usually as big as our Shire horses.

The small heads and short straight backs of the

pedigree Percherons were remarkable. Those "in the book" were in a separate stable, as were the "Black Percherons," said to be a distinct breed, and never crossed with greys, nor were any of their foals grey.

These hundreds of horses were beautifully kept, and the place generally was like a racing stable in its neatness.

The really astonishing thing was the kind and gentle disposition of the stallions. Some three or four were unsafe, but the rest were amiable and kind to a degree, and showed the greatest desire to make friends, nuzzling up to one where they could.

Perhaps the reason for this tractability is that, with the above exceptions, each horse in this great stud is ridden or driven every day during autumn and winter. In a coachhouse as big as a hangar are dozens of brakes, wherein they are driven in fours and pairs and sixes.

It is a great sight to see four of the big Percherons harnessed to a drag, trotting along with their tremendous pace. At the local race meetings a couple of dozen drags driven "four-in-hand" parade after the last race in order to show people what the stud can do.

The fees to the farmers are, or were, very moderate, and everything possible is done to encourage the farmer by shows and prizes. Prizes from £5 to £200 are given annually for the best young stock, the

PERCHERON SIRES EXERCISING AT LE HARAS DES PINS.

progeny of these sires, at the meetings and shows, where farmers are very fond of racing their Norman cobs in harness for small prizes. A good working Percheron can be bought from the farmer for about £60 to £80. Mares "in the book" or pure-bred stallions fetch very big prices and are exported all over the world. One of the best Percherons bred there in recent years has been sold to England and has received championship honours. This is Carburateur, sold to Colonel Hambro, of Coldham Hall, Bury St. Edmunds.

The lesson to be learned is that the farmer is encouraged to produce really good, saleable horses of five distinct types. His land, though very suitable for horse-breeding, is no better than a great deal of the land in Great Britain. It would not be so remunerative to breed trotters here, as record breaking would present more difficulties than it would in France, for it cannot be looked on as a national sport of ours, though popular in many places. But to breed a good type of saddle horse, with "certain" buyers in Japan and elsewhere for Army horses, could not fail to be a good thing for the country. This type is rarely produced by mating a thoroughbred horse with a farmer's mare, as the cross is too far apart. One needs a sire like the old Cock-tails that travelled the countryside some sixty years ago, or the saddle horse sire as found in the excellent stud of Haras des Pins, in order to get the best class of cavalry horse.

Possibly a solution of this difficulty could be solved by crossing thoroughbreds with Cleveland mares. The late Mr. Cecil Prodgers, in his book on Peru, speaks of his famous steeplechase mare Golinda, by St. Blaise II. out of a Cleveland bay mare. Mr. Prodgers weighed 23 stone, and used this Golinda for his occasional desert trips of 200 miles, doing 40 miles a day, and rode her in turn with a horse ridden by a lightweight groom.

Horse-breeding is a somewhat unremunerative affair as generally practised, excluding bloodstock and heavy draught horses, and anything that will help Empire farmers is worthy of looking into. Concentration and the best of sires—that seems to be the keynote of the success at Haras des Pins.

On looking back, one recalls the fact that the Italian Government were at one time large buyers of hackneys for using in their breeding establishments. One wonders if they were a success.

CHAPTER XII

STABLE MANAGEMENT — PERSUADING A REFUSER—CHILDREN'S PONIES AND THEIR RIDERS—RAREY'S METHOD OF HORSE-TAMING

Unless one can command the services of a first-class stud groom, it is absolutely necessary to learn something about stable management, bitting, saddling, and treatment. The first lesson I had as to this was when an Irishman with a silver tongue came to us as coachman for a short—indeed, a very short—time. He began the first evening by producing a prescription which he wished me to have made up "just to keep the harses in health." It took up four sides of a sheet of notepaper and had about thirty most poisonous ingredients in it, from antimony and arsenic onwards.

I learned very early that the less drugs given in the

stable the better; and, indeed, all through the years we kept horses we very rarely called in a vet., except to examine a horse before buying. I picked up a certain number of hints from Captain Hayes' books on horses and from various friends. Two hints helped me greatly—one, the knowledge that if you wish to prevent mud fever you must never wash your horse's fetlocks on coming in from hunting, but dry them if wet and give them a good hand-rubbing, or rub well with straw, and then give a good brushing next morning; the other was the knowing how to make a cotton-wool bandage. If a horse's legs were inclined to fill, or if there were a strain or any tenderness, then a bucket of hot water at once, into which the horse's foot was put and the tendons well fomented, adding fresh and hotter water from time to time; after that the cotton-wool bandage was put on. First a pad of cotton-wool and half-turn of the bandage, another pad and another turn, and so on for several turns, the bandage pulled quite tight once the pads of cotton-wool were next the skin. This is better than any rubbing with embrocation. Anyhow, we kept our horses sound in this way and never had to blister them.

A hint that I could never be too grateful for was how to prevent a sore back. This was to have a saddle heated in front of the saddle-room fire, ready to slap on to your horse's back directly you can get the other saddle off when you come in after hunting. Instead of leaving on the wet saddle, as is generally

done for an hour or so, you leave the warm, dry one on instead. And if, from a badly fitting saddle, you should be unlucky enough to give a sore back, foment the tender place with very hot water and put a paste made of fullers' earth and a little water on it; let it dry on and leave it on for a day or two. This is especially good for a broken skin, whether on yourself or your horse. Many a time have I been saddle sore, especially from the pommel.

I always chose my own oats and hay, as one cannot rely on anyone in this matter. Not only that, but I saw that they were up to sample and that a horse in full work—*i.e.*, doing three days a fortnight and sometimes two a week—should get 12 to 14 lbs. of oats a day; even 16 lbs. for a big horse. If one of them, by any chance, was not feeding well, a change to boiled oats was often beneficial and never seemed to make them soft, while if a horse looked poor and his coat was "staring," I would have a lot of broken, decorticated cotton-cake soaked in a bucket of water for twenty-four hours. Two good handfuls of the resulting jelly-like mixture added to a horse's feed would soon pick him up again without making him soft. I have given boiled

barley in the same way and found it a great pick-me-up.

Few people know how often their horses are docked of their proper rations. My father, at the end of his life when too ill to attend to anything, had a fine pair of home-bred carriage horses brought up to London to sell. They got thinner every day, and the Welsh coachman who had brought them up from birth kept saying the London air didn't suit them indeed. But a discerning vet. found out that, though sacks of corn were delivered, they were mostly taken back again, and the horses were being starved. They are often starved from getting bad oats and poor hay. Many a time have I found mouldy hay in streaks through a truss; at least, it smelt mouldy, and a horse is so dainty a feeder he would starve rather than eat bad hay. The virtue in lucerne hay is not well enough known. If well made and cut just as it begins to flower, there is much more nourishment in it than even in good hay, and where it is used one's corn bill need not be so heavy. When we had lucerne hay to give the farm-horses we did not give them any corn at all. I've used it, well chopped, for pigs and even chickens, with good results. This tip I learned in the States. They have something over there they call "Slippery Elm," which they give to show-horses to help condition them, but I was never able to procure any over here.

It is very important to weigh the feed of corn for

A HORSE JUMPING A FENCE, WITH HUNTSMAN AND GROOM,
BY J. FERNELEY.

one's hunters, as it is the only absolute test that they are getting what they should. Rule of thumb methods are useless, and a measure of light oats is a very different thing to one of heavy, sound oats.

My Irish friend and mentor, Captain Beresford, known to his set as "The Carver and Gilder," as he well knew how to get up a "gee" for sale, gave me a most useful hint about clipping. We had wintered Modjeska, my husband's hack, with a man in the country, and she came up in May for the season, looking like a black furry bear with her thick winter coat. "What on earth am I to do with her?" said I disconsolately to Captain Beresford. "Why, clip her, of course." I did not know that her undercoat was as fine and glossy as satin, and when clipped out she put most other horses to the blush and looked lovely. From that time I made a point of having horses clipped in May that were to be used in the summer. It did them a world of good, made them lively, saved me from being covered with hairs as I rode or drove, and it made the strapping work much easier for the grooms.

Many were the queer bits that were given me from time to time for pulling horses. But if a horse would not go kindly with me in an ordinary double bridle, then he got the "Mohawk Pelham." Señor Martinez da Hos told me that Argentine horses were broken with a "bit" of silk, and after that a leather bit, which was quite soft. He kindly sent me one

of his to try on a young horse, but the youngster promptly bolted, as it had no effect at all.

I never liked a plain snaffle, though I had to ride one horse, who would go in nothing else, in it, with double reins, of course. And if a horse were inclined to get his head up I used a standing martingale in preference to a running martingale, especially when hunting, and never could see that they were at all dangerous.

Two side saddles sufficed me, one for big horses and one for smaller, but I had them constantly seen to and relined with linen, and never used a numnah or a saddle cloth, though I have seen leather ones, soft with much wear, that seemed effective, and have even seen a sheepskin used by a lady who twisted as she rose in the stirrup. A short stirrup suited me best, though a long one was more fashionable and gave a prettier seat, but did not seem to me to give one the same good grip on the pommel as the other.

Riding astride was not then in fashion. It always looks to me much more difficult, though my only experience has been on shooting ponies; but a side saddle gives such a sense of security, and the undoubted fact that a woman's hands on a horse are usually better than a man's is because she is so secure in her seat. One had naturally to be very nimble in getting one's foot out of the stirrup preparatory to a fall, and equally nimble in getting out of the way of one's horse, but on the whole it always seemed to be a

safer seat than a man's. Mine may not have been a pretty seat, but it was a very sure one, and dear old Charles Crichton used to say that, anyhow, I looked as if I could never be dislodged!

We always wore top-hats on smart occasions and bowlers on others, and I still can't get used to the slovenly ways girls dress nowadays, wearing any old hat. Ours were much more difficult to keep on, as they were worn *on* the head instead of the head being rammed into the hat, as to-day, and it was most difficult to keep one's hair tidy. Lady Lurgan was a model of neatness, however hard a run had been, and so was poor Mrs. Atherton.

Staying once in the same house with the latter, I "pitched into" my maid for not doing my hair as well as Mrs. Atherton's was done, for her then dark hair was coiled in the neatest of braids round and round. The maid was indignant. "And so I could if madame would buy one all ready to wear like Mrs. Atherton's!"

Eyeglasses were a great problem; spectacles were unsafe, and I tried a glass screwed into my hat, but it was not much use, and I had to rely on my own very short sight. Now and again I had a jar, such as when cantering through a farm-yard I only perceived the wire from one haystack to another just in time to throw myself back to avoid getting my throat cut; and another day I was badly cut across the face by a stout bramble or briar across a woodland path, and

have the scar yet. I didn't realise how bad it was till a stranger came up and asked me if I didn't think I ought to go home. I really was a shocking sight, and I don't wonder he objected. On the whole, luck was with me, for I used to go at all sorts of places in an apparently reckless manner and on pulling horses. At any rate, any bad falls I had were when going slowly at a place! I remember a certain brook when hunting with the Pytchley, and did not realise the width of it. My pulling mare A1 went at it as usual and got over, but the three or four others who were there preferred to go round, as I should also had I only seen it. Where ignorance is bliss . . .

When a horse is inclined to be sticky at his fences, or even to refuse certain jumps, nothing equals the "long reins" for sharpening them up. We had a light "dumb jockey" that was of great use, but, if that is unobtainable, then a man's saddle can be put on the victim, with the stirrup irons fastened to the girth, and the reins, or, rather, ropes, from the bridle run through the irons so as to get perfect control. The two ropes must not be joined together, but held one in each hand, so that after the jump, if the horse is inclined to get away, one rope can be dropped, whereupon he will swing right round and can be stopped.

Our Grey Boy particularly disliked jumping water or even ditches, so now and then he was given a taste of the long reins and driven back and forth over a

WILLIAM RUSSELL IN THE HUNTING FIELD. BY CLAUDE FERNELEY.

ditch in a nearby field. My plump coachman would take the reins and I a driving whip with which to touch up Grey Boy as he neared the ditch. The first time he was sent over the man clung to the reins instead of letting one of them slip through his hands while the horse was jumping and then checking him, with the result that he had to jump the ditch himself, and to see his fat legs hurtling through the air after the horse made one weep with laughter. After a time he got into the trick of it and found it an excellent plan. If a horse tries to refuse, one can "back" him till he tires, and manage him far better than if he is being ridden.

It gives children great confidence to put the long reins on their pony, and after a while the hands, or, rather, arms, should have a stick through them, behind the back, so that they learn to stick on without touching the reins. After driving them quietly round a field one day at a walk, the next at a trot, and in a day or two a canter, they get their balance beautifully and learn not to depend on the reins at all. Both my younger sons learned in this way and turned out fearless riders with good hands.

When the boy has arrived at a perfect balance and can ride by himself, then put the long reins on and drive the pony gently over a low jump, but letting the boy have the reins in his hands this time. I used to find that lazy grooms, unless carefully watched, would prefer to put one rein only on a horse that

wanted exercising, in a ring, but to use two reins as described is far better than lungeing a horse.

Good ponies for boys are most difficult to find. It is a *sine qua non* that they should be narrow in the back, but it is not easy to try them properly, as most people are too heavy to get on them, and a pulling pony is enough to destroy any child's nerve.

When my eldest, Hubert, was eight or nine we had recommended to us most warmly a pony from Northamptonshire that a doctor's little boy had been hunting and had outgrown, or so it was said. The pony was quiet enough on a lead till it saw hounds, when with a buck it wrenched the lead from the groom's hands, threw the boy, whose foot caught in the stirrup, and dragged him round the field. Ever after that I had patent stirrup-leathers that would come away with the child, but they must be oiled and carefully looked after or they will be useless. This pony was so keen to get to hounds that if he heard them a mile away he would break out of any shed or field and go off at a tearing gallop after them. Imagine recommending such a brute for a child's first pony.

A gipsy came along one day with some ponies from the New Forest. One of them was the very model of what a child's pony should be, a lovely little mare. But she proved quite unmanageable, and we could do nothing with her; she would kick and rear and throw herself down with temper when she felt bridle or saddle,

Finally, Rarey's method of taming horses was tried under my supervision. A light rope was fastened by a slip knot to the end of the pony's tail and was then fastened under and over the lower jaw of the pony, coming out at the near side of the mouth. The end of the rope was then taken across the pony's back and held by a man on the off side. As he pulled, the pony's head and tail were brought towards each other. It had to be done very gradually until the pony's head was brought right round, when it would overbalance and come gently to the ground, but always with the head kept turned to the man on the off side, otherwise its neck would get broken. When down, one of us would take a long stick and gently tap the pony all over, talking to it and getting it calmed down. After keeping it on the ground for some little time it was gradually unshackled and allowed to get up. The pony seemed to realise that it had been mastered by man and never attempted to show signs of temper again. She was not hurt in the least; in fact, to our great surprise, she was found in a field with a foal two months later! She made a capital pony for one of my boys, both before and after this happy event. The method is very clearly explained in Rarey's book on horse-breaking, and is, in fact, the secret that he never would disclose when he tamed fiery horses for high fees earlier in his career.

My youngest boy, John, was an inveterate foxhunter from the age of seven. He had a small pony, who was

so worn out by the end of the holidays that it took him all term to recover in time for the next. He was first at all the meets, and would ride home with the huntsman and whips at the end of the day. His pony could crawl and climb through or over anything, and he would sometimes come home highly elated at having given a lead to So-and-so, whose horse "wasn't having" a jump, but who could not for very shame continue to refuse after seeing a small pony tackle it. The first day he was out hunting his pony lay down at a ford, from which the boy emerged wet and muddy but still undaunted. The pony Punch, to which he was promoted later on, was the only perfect boy's hunter I've ever known, and was afterwards sold to Mr. Seely.

The children of to-day grow up so quickly and learn much more about riding and hunting than we used to. I can't imagine a child of twelve being master of a pack of harriers in my day. They simply weren't capable of such a thing and had not got the necessary initiative. But I wonder sometimes if they get the same "thrill" as I used to at the prospect of a hunt, if it has been a matter of course with them from childhood. Children have better ponies than we had, and, indeed, the average horse is better than it was before the days of motors. Now it is not worth while to breed any but a good horse—one that will bring a good price.

Prices have altered greatly too. Where one could

be certain of getting a good sound hunter for £100 or less, the same stamp of horse realises £250 to-day. I myself was particularly fortunate, for, though my mounts were not always good looking and with three exceptions their manners were not of the best, I usually bought them cheaper than that; and I never rode a screw, with the exception of Ladybird, and we only found *her* out after two seasons.

I recently paid a visit to Lady Kathleen Lindsay at Nesley, in the Duke of Beaufort's country, who with her daughter is carrying on her late husband's old stables (Colonel Walter Lindsay). Never have I seen horses look better and fitter in September. Some eighteen horses in boxes ranged round a big yard—doors all open, and only a swinging chain in front of each. The moral effect of this chain is remarkable, and only once has a horse been known to get out, though, of course, it would be perfectly easy to do so.

Miss Doreen Lindsay, now Mrs. Richard Archer Houblon, buys most of the gees in Ireland, and has decided notions on feeding, etc. For one thing, she likes to feed six times a day instead of three, with excellent reasons and results.

One can sometimes pick up a very fast horse there, as Mrs. "Bertie" Marriott found when she bought KilMacthomas (who had previously won the Beaufort Hunt heavyweight race, 1927), with which her husband won the Bar Point-to-Point, and a very popular win it was.

The stud groom is extraordinarily quiet with the horses, and does everything to induce the men to be the same. And he tries to encourage intelligence in the horses themselves, which is one of the reasons that the stable doors are open all day. One horse was led across the yard to be shod. Instantly every head was stretched out as far as it would go to see what was happening!

In my travels in various parts of the world I have had many amusements and experiences, even going up in an aeroplane in 1911, when very few women in England had attempted flying. Sailing a yacht was good fun, but I have never come across anything in the world to touch hunting. It is the only time when all sense of "self" is absent, and one is completely taken out of one's self, only conscious of the effort to keep up with hounds, of the horse, and of the next fence; there is no time to think of one's own feelings. Possibly racing or steeplechasing would have the same effect, but no game, such as polo or cricket, where one has to rely on one's skill, could surely come under the same category.

Even though one has given up hunting, the sight and sound of hounds or horn, a pink coat, the galloping of horses, has the power to raise a pang of longing and memory such as nothing else can do.

Motoring from Farncombe to Stoneleigh last September I came across the North Cotswolds, a long way from home. It was about 11.30 and very hot.

THE MARQUIS OF WORCESTER AND THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT'S HOUNDS.

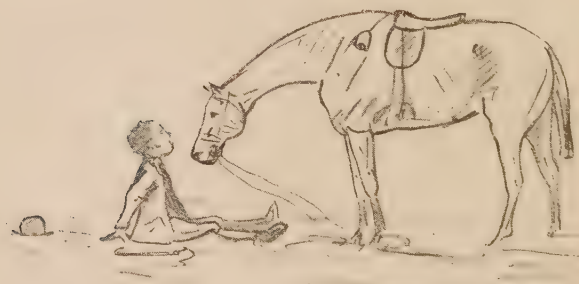
and the hounds were lying down to rest in a field alongside the road. When I reached Stoneleigh an hour or so later I saw a whip dismount and tie his horse to the railings of the garden and search for a young hound, which he collected on the lawn, while the clatter down the road of the Warwickshire horses on their way home made me wonder whether I should ever see two packs of hounds again on one morning!

I shall always think of beautiful Stoneleigh on a sunny morning, with hounds and pink coats in front of the fourteenth-century gatehouse.

There are those who say that it is cruel to the fox (who would otherwise be exterminated), but how many other things infinitely more cruel than hunting do they condone. It is, at any rate, a clean and honest sport, with no gambling and its attendant evils, and a capital school for the young, who learn patience, politeness, self-control, and self-effacement, courage, and many other lessons not easily learned in any other school. And how the love of hunting binds together Englishmen of all sorts and conditions! What the fox thinks one does not know, but for myself I would far rather be a fox with a glorious if short life of freedom than, say, a pampered Peke, adored to suffocation, whose natural and even low instincts are stifled in caresses, cushions, and satin bows! (He is really a sporting little person, but his anguished expression when being cuddled tells its own tale.) Man and fox both are hunters by instinct, but a fox is wantonly

cruel, as when one killed twenty-five chickens of mine, and only carried off one for food!

If hunting were put an end to, foxes would increase in numbers to such an extent that it would be found necessary to exterminate them. Then the vermin, including rabbits, so far kept in check by foxes, would multiply till no game, chickens, or grass could be found!

Much sentimentality is voiced by people who claim that fox-hunting is cruel. But those same people see no harm in caging great creatures of the wild, such as tigers and lions, till they die. Think of *their* lives when it comes to cruelty!

There are some who, though devoted to hunting, have found there are other things to be done in this short life. But because they choose to take a certain line and give up hunting they are not heard to abuse a sport which has always been the sport of England.